Wings Over Ethiopia

JULY, 1936

new Masses

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Through Liberty to Socialism

Ninth Convention of the Communist Party

By JOSEPH FREEMAN

Roosevelt's Convention

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have received a warm response from many readers to our previous requests in this matter, but we must make it again, for we have reached our limit. From political prisoners, from unpaid workers in the labor movement who cannot afford the price, from workers' schools all over the country, which find it a hard enough struggle to pay the rent, calls come to NEW MASSES for gift subscriptions.

We have made these gifts but we cannot afford to add to a list that already burdens our resources. Yet, it is there that NEW MASSES is vitally needed. For many political prisoners, NEW MASSES is the only way by which they can maintain contact with the revolutionary movement. For the worker in the labor movement, NEW MASSES has proved to be a valuable tool for recruiting and organizing. In the workers' schools, NEW MASSES has often proved the most popular and appealing literature for workers making their first approach to the militant labor movement.

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New Masses

JULY 7, 1936

Here Are the Answers

THE Communist platform adopted by 25,000 cheering men and women at Madison Square Garden last Sunday provides the soundest answers given by any convention this year to the pressing questions confronting the American people in this election. The program proposes specific measures for putting America back to work, for providing jobs and a living wage for all. Its proposals for unemployment insurance, old-age pensions and social security base themselves on the Frazier-Lundeen bill, the Marcantonio relief standards bill, extension of the W.P.A. and similar measures. The plank for protecting the younger generations includes the American Youth Act.

The farm plank offers sound and specific ideas for liberating the farmers from debts, unbearable tax burdens and foreclosures, and for guaranteeing the land to those who till the soil. Taxation is based on the capacity of the rich to pay for social and labor legislation. To this is added a demand for the nationalization of banking.

The section outlining measures for defense and extension of democratic rights and civil liberties stresses curbing the Supreme Court by constitutional amendment and Congressional action to curb the Court's usurped powers. Equality for the Negro people is interpreted to mean equality in jobs, equal pay for equal work; the full right to organize, vote, serve on juries and to hold public office; and the death penalty is demanded for lynchers. There is also a demand that anti-semitic propaganda be made punishable by law.

The planks for maintaining peace and preventing war call for collective security, with financial and economic measures toward that end by the League of Nations against Hitler Germany, fascist Italy and imperialist Japan. There are demands, too, for the nationalization of the munitions industry, non-interference in Latin-American affairs, and the refusal of the United States government to recognize Italy's conquest of Ethiopia and Japan's conquest of Manchuria.

These are a few highlights of an election platform realizable under capitalism, which makes it required reading for every civilized American. We will publish it in full next week.

"WHAT'S DIS FASHISM DEY'RE YELLIN' ABOUT?" *Ernie*

While Rome Burns . . .

POPULAR indignation against the Black Legion stirred various members of Congress to call for a federal investigation of that fascist outfit. Some six or seven slightly varying bills to that end were introduced toward the close of the session.

A legislative representative for a leading liberal organization informs us that Congressman Blanton, Democrat, Texas, opposed "such foolish spending of the taxpayers' money." Senator King of Utah thought the Black Legion was "a shame," but "none of the business of the federal government." The senator's attention was called to the fact that a state investigation by Michigan politicians would lead to a whitewashing. "Too bad," Senator King is said to have replied. "It can't be helped."

Despite this opposition, Senator Ber son of Minnesota pushed his own for a Black Legion investigation Friday, June 19, the Senate Juc

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Committee gave it a favorable ruling. According to rules of procedure, the bill should then have gone to the Audit and Control Committee headed by Senator Byrnes, South Carolina, for an appropriation. Yet Saturday's calendar carried no notice of the status of this bill. Somehow, the Senate clerk had managed to "overlook" notifying Senator Byrnes that the Judiciary Committee had favorably reported on investigating the Black Legion. And Senator Byrnes said he had no further jurisdiction over the matter.

Senator Benson, informed of this parliamentary rigmarole, is reported to have said, "Sounds like a stall to me; if the Administration wants it, the bill can still be pushed through; I'll see Robinson." Whether or not Senator Benson saw the majority floor leader we do not know, but we understand that the Minnesota senator finally told the legislative representative of a leading liberal organization it was best to "let the matter drop."

This is how a federal investigation into the Black Legion was killed in the 74th Congress. Yet such an investigation is imperative if the armed forces of reaction are to be exposed and stopped. That must be impressed on every candidate for Congress this fall.

Golden Gloves Plus

BOB BURKE came out of the steel mills of Youngstown, Ohio, to get an education at Columbia University. He is being sent back where he came from. His crime, apparently, was to correlate the experience of his youth with the academic theories of Morningside Heights. The result was leadership of progressive student action there, a prominent place in the ranks of the American Student Union. Now he has received word from Dean Herbert E. Hawkes that "it would be in the best interests of all concerned if you did not register in Columbia College next fall."

The incident which provoked his dismissal was the protest demonstration of several hundred students against Columbia's acceptance of the invitation to the Heidelberg anniversary Nazi lovefest. Burke was one of the leaders of the embarrassing protest. It terminated in a riot when several exuberant crew and football men decided to express themselves in traditional fashion. Now Columbia University, which has stubbornly refused to recognize campus sentiment on the Heidelberg issue, uses the episode to oust a boy who, in two years, has become one of the most popular students on the campus. President of the Junior class, 160-pound Golden Gloves boxing champion of New York, Burke is a colorful product of "rebel America." He was consequently "too dangerous." He has discovered that the trustees of his university are little different from the steel barons of Youngstown. They are often the same people. It won't be long before they start calling him a "foreign agitator" who was "stirring up discontent" on Morningside Heights. He *was* stirring thought and action of a real, enduring kind.

Burke's dismissal cannot go unchallenged. Protests should descend upon the University at once, preliminary to a nation-wide campaign in the fall upon reopening of school. Columbia is not only going to Heidelberg this summer. It is drifting from an aimless pseudo-liberalism into the ready arms of American reaction. Robert Burke's reinstatement would be a lesson which all reactionary university authorities would not soon forget.

Keep Them in America!

THREE thousand non-citizens will be deported from the United States beginning next week as a result of the failure of Congress to pass the resolution authorizing the Commissioner of Immigration to stay this wholesale expulsion.

The Board of Review thoroughly investigated these cases. They were placed on a special "hardship" list because: (1) they were guilty only of minor misdemeanors; (2) there would be extreme hardship involved in the separation of families; (3) they are assets to American society whose presence would be desirable if deportation were not required by legal technicalities.

Most of the men scheduled for deportation had fled from religious, racial and political persecution. They could not obtain passport papers and are now held on charges of "illegal entry."

If they are deported, 7000 members of their immediate families will be thrown on relief. Five thousand of these wives and children are American citizens.

The only possible means of saving these thousands of men, women and children is through an avalanche of letters and telegrams to Colonel McCormack, Commissioner of Immigration, requesting that he stay the deportations until measures can be passed in the next session of Congress providing for a more humane solution of these cases.

Steel "Protects" Its Workers

THE American Iron and Steel Institute, while declaring open war against the drive of trade unionists to organize the steel industry, pretends to be interested in the untrammeled right of employes to collective bargaining.

It offers the novel argument that the C. I. O. organization drive threatens interference with the right to collective bargaining freely enjoyed today by the steel workers in company unions. The statement of the open shoppers concludes in these terms:

> The steel industry will use its resources to the best of its ability to protect its employees and their families from intimidation, coercion and violence and to aid them in maintaining collective bargaining free from interference from any source.

The inference is a clear and sinister one. The steel trust is about to make use of its vast private armies and arsenals in order to defeat labor's drive for industrial organization.

Meanwhile the drive is already reaching the steel towns. Last week public meetings of steel workers with a total attendance of 4000 were addressed by representatives of John L. Lewis's organization committee in McKeesport and Brackenridge, Pennsylvania. At the Portsmouth, Ohio, plant of the Wheeling Steel Corporation, 5,500 men are entering the second month of their strike for recognition of the steelworkers' Amalgamated Association. Led by an A.A. lodge, a thirteen-day strike has just been won by workers in the Eastern Rolling Mills, Baltimore. As in the case of the Homestead Works, property of the Illinois Steel Company, large plants are being surrounded with woven wire fences suitable for conducting high voltage electric currents. The companies are exercising countless forms of "intimidation, coercion and violence," to prevent the workers from entering the Amalgamated. This would make it appear that steel's half million workers are not nearly so loyal to company unionism as the open shoppers would have the country believe.

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Vanquish the Victor

THERE will be no check list of recordings in this week's issue because of the strike at the R.C.A. Victor plant at Camden, New Jersey. Despite the company protests that only a fraction of the workers walked out, there have been no shipments of either Victor or Bluebird records from Camden this week. Readers are advised to delay the purchase of R.C.A. products until such time as the United Electrical and Radio Workers Union obtains satisfactory recognition from the company. Reviews of Heifetz's recording of the Sibelius "Violin Concerto," with Beecham and the London Philharmonic, and the latest swing records by Goodman, Henderson, and Dorsey's orchestras will be delayed until that time.

Liars Can Figure

NAZI Minister of Public Enlightenment Goebbels is fond of screaming about the reemployment of German workers under the Hitler regime. In January, 1933, says the Propaganda Office, only twelve million workers were employed and six million were out of work, while today sixteen million hold jobs, with only two million unemployed. What the Nazis fail to advertise is that all eighteen million German workers today have the same total real income as they had in 1933. All that has been done is to take from the poor to give to the poorer.

What, then, becomes of the surplus product yielded by the work of four million more persons? Here is the trick of Nazi economy. The surplus product, for the most part, consists of machine guns, artillery, bombers, tanks, barracks and motor roads. More Germans are at work, but they are not making goods which they can use for themselves. And they are just as hungry as they were before.

The low purchasing power of the German masses is part of a deliberate policy. What the workers receive will be spent on consumption goods, not on guns and munitions. Consequently, as much as possible of the national income must either be taken immediately by the State through drastic taxation or else it must go to those who can be counted on to invest it where it will do the Nazi government the most good, that is, armaments.

The Tug-of-War in Spain

REPORTING left-wing politics accurately has never been the strong point of the conservative press. It is therefore not surprising to find events in Spain considerably distorted in most of the newspapers of this country. This is especially true of The New York Times, whose Vatican-minded Madrid correspondent, William Carney, greeted the Azana government with a series of blood-curdling tales which set the tone for the recent dispatches by Frederick Birchall.

The People's Front movement in Spain, as in France, is of such instructive significance that we prevailed on Jose Diaz, secretary of the Spanish Communist Party, to write a special article for THE NEW MASSES. The article, describing the subversive activities of the Spanish reaction, appears in this issue.

Since Jose Diaz wrote it, the reaction has grown bolder. In a calculated, large-scale maneuver, Spanish employers have provoked a long-drawn-out strike movement. They have violated collective agreements with the trade unions and flagrantly disregarded minimum-wage legislation. They have kept the factories closed in order to intimidate the workers through hunger, to spread panic among the middle classes. Above all, they have tried to shift the onus for this state of affairs to the labor movement. Their real attitude is revealed by their persistent refusal to enter into discussions for a settlement of the strike. In the month-old strike of Madrid construction workers, for example, the employers have rejected the decision of an arbitration board.

Unfortunately, this maneuver of the employers has been facilitated by the inaction of the Left Republican government. But the Spanish people have been carefully watching events across the Pyrenees. They have seen a similar situation met resolutely by the Blum government in France. As a result leftist groups in Spain have been increasingly insistent that Premier Casares Quiroga act more forcefully to bring employers to terms. They urge that, if necessary, the government take over and operate the enterprises of those owners who persist in promoting a state of chaos.

Chiang's Dilemma

SOUTH CHINA troops are reported to have renewed their advance north as their Canton leaders continued to bear down upon Chiang Kai-shek and the Nanking government with the demand for a united war against Japan.

Chiang has been extremely apprehensive of popular reaction against any open move on his part to make war upon the anti-Japanese forces to the south. He has therefore begun to center a barrage of accusations against the Canton

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EDITORS:
JOSEPH FREEMAN, MICHAEL GOLD, RUSSELL T. LIMBACH, BRUCE MINTON, ISIDOR SCHNEIDER
Contributing Editors: GRANVILLE HICKS, JOSHUA KUNITZ, LOREN MILLER
WILLIAM BROWDER, *Business Manager* WILLIAM RANDORF, *Circulation Manager*

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leaders in an attempt to discredit their anti-Japanese stand and mitigate his own guilt in allowing the Japanese to invade the country. He has accused Canton of acting at the instigation of Japan and desiring to plunge China into civil war. But it is reported that sentiment for cooperation with Canton in an anti-Japanese war continues to sweep all of Kuomintang China, which would indicate that Chiang's propaganda has not been of great avail.

Meanwhile tension grows in North China. Japanese mobs attacked Chinese Customs Offices in Tsingtao last week after customs patrols had fired upon Japanese vessels engaged in smuggling. The arrogance of the Japanese will undoubtedly increase if Chiang Kai-shek continues in his refusal to join forces against the invader.

Unfavorable Balance

THE second session of the 74th Congress accomplished little that was good, and that little only under the pressure of necessity. Almost all the activity of the session, good and bad, was crowded into the last two months, nor was there much effort by the Administration to stimulate a Congress reticent in the face of an approaching election.

After years of mass pressure, grown measurably stronger during the depression, Congress got around to paying off the bonus. In this instance the impending elections served to induce quick action rather than evasion and delay. Failure to make provision for financing the bonus payments detracted from the value of the measure, since the outlay must now come from general taxation, borne to the extent of 62 percent by the section of the population least able to pay. Nevertheless, the bonus payment is definitely to be placed on the credit side of the Congressional ledger.

Likewise on the credit side, with abundant reservations, is the new tax bill. As finally worked out in conference, it is a better measure than either of the tax bills originally passed by the separate houses. The Senate would have drastically minimized the tax on undistributed earnings urged by the Administration, while the House would have placed almost exclusive reliance on this device at the sacrifice of the corporation income tax. The compromise measure, retaining both these features, scarcely makes a dent in the armor of entrenched wealth, but it is a blow in the right direction, however feeble.

MORE important than the few meager legislative gains recorded during the session were the investigating activities of the Senate. American finance capital stands revealed in its slimier phases in the volumes of testimony recorded by the Black lobbying committee, while the preliminary findings of the LaFollette committee on violations of civil liberties show the alarming extent to which American labor is subjected to espionage, terror, and the suppression of its simplest democratic rights. Unfortunately, Congress could see its way clear to making only the miserly appropriation of $15,000 for a thorough investigation into the savage armed war against organized workers. Not even a beginning can be made on this pittance. The LaFollette committee will be a valuable weapon in publicizing industrial terrorism only if pressure is brought to bear to prevent such hamstringing tactics.

Against this frail background of mild progressive legislation is a record of steady retreat before reaction. Military and naval appropriations reached a new high for peacetime, totaling $909,651,391. For the fiscal year 1934, the first of the Roosevelt administratioin, appropriations for this purpose were only $479,694,308, or little more than half the current figure. An utterly inadequate relief measure was jammed through which, it is estimated, will force another million persons on local direct relief. Together with existing funds, the new appropriation of $1,435,000,000 allows less than half of what is needed to provide even minimum relief for the year.

To replace the outlawed A.A.A. a new soil-conservation act was passed. Nominally it was designed to transfer lands from intensive cultivation into pasturage for the sake of strengthening the soil and preventing erosion. For such transfers benefit payments are to be made such as those paid out under the A.A.A. Actually the measure has little to do with soil conservation. Since the program revolves about the question of productivity and farm prices, it is the big farmers, holding the best land, who will draw the biggest payments, while those farmers who can least afford to experiment with erosion control at their own expense will receive the smallest benefits. All payments, moreover, will be 28 percent less than those made under the A.A.A.

THE need for a strong and permanent peace policy, at a time when every month sees a fresh threat of world war, was glossed over by extending the present neutrality law, with a few changes, to May, 1937. This means the extension of a deceptive policy of isolation, under cover of which preparations are made for war, in place of a realistic policy based on collective security.

The Congressional guardians of big business managed to knife all genuine efforts to safeguard the purity of food and drugs and to eliminate gross and fraudulent advertising. Floor strategy killed the new Guffey bill, which, even in its emasculated form, would have contributed somewhat to a preservation of wage scales in the coal industry. The mere threat of filibustering was enough to bring forth an announcement by majority leader Robinson that it would "not be practicable" to consider the Wagner-Costigan anti-lynching bill during the recent session.

Obstructionists likewise quashed the Sisson bill to repeal the infamous "Red rider" to the previous session's appropriation for the District of Columbia, under which Washington teachers are compelled to take an oath each payday that they have not been teaching Communism in the schools. And perhaps most shameful of all its sins of omission was the complete failure of Congress to come to any agreement on a program of low-cost housing and slum clearance. Expected to be one of the cardinal achievements of the session, the Wagner-Ellenbogen housing bill was whittled down in the Senate from a $976,000,000 measure to one of $460,000,000, and then failed even to reach a vote in the House.

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Wings Over Ethiopia

COLONEL JOHN C. ROBINSON

SINCE my recent return from war-torn Ethiopia I have been besieged by representatives of the press and private individuals asking me scores of questions.

My enlistment as a member of the Imperial Ethiopian Air Corps came several years after my graduation from Tuskegee Institute. I had majored in automotive mechanics at college and, after arriving in Chicago, continued in this work, setting up an auto mechanic shop. During my leisure I became an ardent air fan. I organized a group of my former Tuskegee classmates into an aero study club. We built our first plane, a nondescript affair, out of old parts and with a motorcycle engine. It proved airworthy; it actually flew.

Immediately I went into aeronautics in earnest, and after graduating from the Curtiss-Wright School in Chicago I taught mechanical and ground work subjects. Then I started a class of aviation students, all colored, and finding no flying facilities available, I established an airfield at Robbins, Illinois, an all-Negro town near Chicago—to the best of my knowledge, America's first airfield owned and operated by Negroes. I tried to interest more of my people in aviation and made plans for a flying school and airfield at Tuskegee Institute, but my work was soon halted when it became apparent that Mussolini's armies were bent upon invading Ethiopia.

I decided at once to go to Ethiopia and join its Air Corps. I was favorably received, accorded every courtesy, and later I was commissioned a member of the Imperial Air Corps.

Immediately I saw the necessity of correlating the various departments of the Air Force. At the invitation of His Majesty, I made certain recommendations, which when adopted increased the efficiency of the Air Corps. There were in all thirty Ethiopian pilots, mostly trained in England and France. No Ethiopian plane was armed.

I was honored by being appointed personal pilot to His Majesty the Emperor, and although we had many close brushes with enemy pilots high up in the air, we luckily came through unscathed. While the high mountainous country was most helpful to the Ethiopian armies in their gallant defense of their country, the constant clouds at the high altitude (frequently present in mountainous regions) helped save my life many times. While carrying the Emperor to secret rendezvous at the front or bringing back important military orders and dispatches to Addis Ababa, or back to field headquarters, I was frequently chased by fast Italian squadrons. I owe my life today to those friendly Ethiopian clouds into which I immediately dived to evade pursuers. In spite of this I was gassed three times when my airfield was bombed by gas shells. There are times even now when I can hardly breathe.

There can be no doubt of the almost fanatical heroism of the Ethiopian troops, of the superior, brilliant fight they put up against hopelessly insurmountable odds, and against the leaden hail of death and gas bombs of the Italian forces. Nor can there be any doubt of the inhumanity of Il Duce's men, of the cruelty and viciousness of the invading armies, of their gassing and bombing unprotected towns and of their wholesale slaughter of unarmed men, women and children. When a warring nation violates the sanctity of the Red Cross and mercilessly rains down bombs on Red Cross hospitals to kill innocent, God-inspired nurses and the helpless patients to whom they are giving medical care—no word of condemnation is strong enough. And this the Italians did—not once but many times—in fact so often that when the Italians started an air raid, any spot in the open was far safer than the confines of a Red Cross hospital.

At the beginning of hostilities it became almost immediately apparent to those who studied the comparative strength and resources of the two countries, that if Ethiopia could hold her own until the next rainy season, her chances of success would be immeasurably strengthened. With the onward march of the Italians, however, this hope faded, the morale of both soldiers and civilians weakened, and finally there were wholesale desertions to the ranks of the Colonials fighting under the Italian banner. Intrigue and mass bribery of provincial chiefs under the influence of Ras Hailu were mainly responsible for the demoralization of the Ethiopian army in the North. Then again, thousands of Haile Selassie's troops felt that he had betrayed them by putting too much faith in the League of Nations, instead of arming his men and organizing the defense. These critics declared that the League's sympathy and commiseration was a weak, impotent answer to a nation that hurled death-dealing bombs from the sky, killing the sick and the maimed and the non-combatants.

WERE it not for the rebel troops who lost faith in their ruler the Italians would not have advanced even as far as Dessye. The stubbornness of the opposition offered by the stout-hearted, loyal Ethiopian troops is shown by the fact that despite the modern air equipment of the Italians, their armored motor trucks, high-powered bombing planes, radio transmission facilities and their engineering corps, their advance was held back by the Ethiopians, until, for the entire seven-months period ending with the fall of Addis Ababa, the daily gain was approximately one kilometer.

From my experience in Ethiopia, my knowledge of the country and its terrain and my intimate contact with the government officials, soldiers and civilians, I am firmly convinced that Il Duce's troubles did not end with the advance of his troops into Addis Ababa—rather did that entry mark their beginning. I believe guerilla warfare of the most savage sort will soon commence (if it has not already), in the impenetrable mountain fastnesses in the west of Ethiopia, where at best it will take years for the Italians to penetrate. The new capital of the country is at Goree in the Jimma, west of Addis Ababa province, where today 50,000 men have rallied to the banner of Ras Desta Demtu. Then to the north of these are two other armies. One, formerly commanded by Ras Seyoum, numbers about 100,000 men and near Lake Tsana there are about 30,000 trained regulars.

It is legendary among the Ethiopians that every man is a fighter and the highest honors are those bestowed for valor on the field of battle. The fierce warriors of the interior lead a daily fighting existence, even among themselves, but they become a unit and forget all factional strife when given the chance to face the Italians, whom they detest more than any other European.

American Negroes should also remember that the Ethiopians are a proud people, with a heritage dating back thousands of years. They remain an unconquered people, with a strong love of liberty. In the interior there are thousands who have never seen a white face; they have no color complex and admit no white superiority. With this in view it is easier to understand their aversion to dominance by an outside nation.

Aid from the white and colored citizens of America and the other countries of the world would certainly have been and still would be acceptable to Haile Selassie. This aid, however, in his case as it would be in the case of any other ruler of a sovereign country, would have to be above-board and bona fide.

Ethiopia's salvation and her future status, to my mind, depend on the action of the League of Nations, and the determination of the nation members to refuse recognition of Italy's annexation of the country. It is purely a test of strength between Italy and the League—Italy saying, "I've taken Ethiopia, what are you going to do about it?" and the League replying, "No, you haven't taken it; you're an aggressor nation, have broken the League covenant and thereby defied more than fifty nations of the world."

If Italy wins, the covenant of the League of Nations is not worth the paper it is written on. If the League wins, the sovereignty of a free people will have been recognized and the door closed to similar aggressions in the future by unscrupulous nations seeking expansion of their territory and power.

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Through Liberty to Socialism

JOSEPH FREEMAN

EVEN before the convention opened, you felt something big was going to happen. The very decorations in the Manhattan Opera House for the Ninth National Convention of the Communist Party conveyed confidence.

Across the galleries, flaming red streamers with white letters carried slogans of faith in victory: The unity of labor can crush fascism and prevent war! For a free, happy and prosperous America! Keep America out of war by keeping war out of the world! High in the rear of the auditorium an immense canvas showed the Spirit of '76—drummer, fifer, standard bearer—carrying red and American flags intertwined. Out of these emerged the faces of Washington, Jefferson, John Brown, Lincoln, Frederick Douglass; beneath them the slogan: Communism is twentieth-century Americanism.

Delegates took their seats quietly at the round tables. Not a single banker, industrialist, corporation lawyer, Wall Street speculator among them. These were workers, farmers and professionals, like the vast majority of the American people. Later the credentials committee brought in some illuminating figures. For the first time in its history, the Communist Party was holding a convention with representation from all forty-eight states of the Union. There were 701 regular and fraternal delegates, twice the number at the 1932 convention. The Communist Party is young: 65 percent of the delegates are under thirty-five years of age. It is full of new blood: 62 percent of the delegates have been in the Party less than five years. It is a party of workers: 88 percent of the delegates are of proletarian, 12 percent of middle-class origin. It has won over men and women from other parties: 21 percent of the delegates were formerly in the Socialist Party, nine percent in the Democratic Party, seven percent in the I.W.W., five percent in the Republican Party.

Other figures were equally striking: 70 percent of the delegates are native-born, 30 percent foreign-born Americans; eleven percent women, fifteen percent Negroes, 67 percent from basic industries like steel, metal, automobiles, textiles, railways and shipping; 23 percent from the building trades, needle, shoe, food, white-collar and professional groups. The delegates are trade union members, 223 of them from A.F. of L. unions, 85 trade union officials.

The hall rocked with applause and cheers when William Z. Foster, the Party's chairman, opened the convention. It rocked again when Earl Browder, the Party's general secretary, closed it. And in between, for four days and four nights, when speakers took and left the platform, boundless enthusiasm shook the auditorium. The delegates were not reacting to oratory. There were no rhetorical tricks, no inflated phrases such as boomed through the microphones at Cleveland and Philadelphia. Each speaker said his say with the precision of a scientist. And it was these carefully planned analyses which evoked profound emotion sustained at the highest pitch and thought working at its hardest.

You could see why from the very first speech. Foster stated the issue squarely, unmistakably. The old order, he said, has the seal of death upon its forehead but is not willing to die. We meet under the shadow of menacing fascism and war. The program of the Communist Party offers the only way out. We do not stand aside from the daily struggles and problems of the millions of people until the majority has been won for socialism. We take our stand shoulder to shoulder with the masses of the people and in the front line of all their struggles. Our program is one of immediate unity of these masses in the daily fight for better living conditions, maintenance and extension of their democratic rights, and for peace.

This was Wednesday morning. That afternoon, Earl Browder made his keynote address. For two and a half hours a spellbound convention heard him develop the position of the Communist Party in this "situation of deepening crisis of the capitalist world," and in this year's elections, "the most fateful election struggle that our country has witnessed since the Civil War."

ANALYZING the issues and parties in the 1936 elections, Browder stressed the "two chief and possible developments." One stems from the most reactionary circles of finance capital, Wall Street; its direction is toward fascism and war. He summarized the fundamental aims of this camp in five points:

(1) Restore capitalist profits by cutting wages, raising prices, checking the growth of trade unions, subverting them and eventually wiping them out; squeeze out the poor farmers from agriculture, transforming them into propertyless workers. (2) Wipe out social and labor legislation, balance the budget by eliminating unemployment relief, cutting the taxes of the rich and throwing the tax burden onto the poor by means of sales taxes. (3) Remove all remains of popular influence upon the government by vesting all final power in the hands of an irresponsible judiciary—the Supreme Court; drive toward the curtailment and eventual destruction of democratic liberties and civil rights; create the storm troops of reaction, Black Legions, Ku Klux Klans, etc. (4) Seize control of all governmental machinery, moving toward a full-fledged fascist regime, in "American" and "constitutional" ways. (5) Develop extreme jingoist nationalist moods among the masses; drive toward war under cover of "American isolation" and "neutrality;" support to and alliance with Hitler and other fascists preparing the new world war.

The other chief direction of possible development, Browder said, moves and must move toward an opposite set of aims:

(1) Restore and raise the living standard of the masses by higher wages, shorter hours, lower prices; extending the trade unions to the basic industries and all workers, through militant industrial unionism; secure the farmers in possession of their farms, with governmental help and guarantee of a minimum standard of life. (2) Consolidate and extend social and labor legislation with guarantee of a minimum standard of life for all, financing this with sharply-graduated taxes on incomes, property and accumulated surpluses, abolition of sales taxes, balancing the budget at the expense of the rich. (3) Curb the usurped power of the Supreme Court; maintain and extend democratic rights and civil liberties; disperse reactionary bands, abolish the use of legal machinery to suppress the people's movements; extend popular control over government. (4) Restore control of the government to representatives of the people's organizations through a broad people's front. (5) Unite with the peace forces of the whole world to restrain the war-makers to keep America out of war by keeping war out of the world.

In relation to these two opposite sets of objectives, Browder declared without qualification that "the Landon-Hearst-Wall-Street ticket is the chief enemy of the liberties, peace and prosperity of the American people." Its victory, he said, would carry our country a long way on the road to fascism and war. Roosevelt and his administration are trying to pursue a middle course between these two opposite, fundamental directions of policy. On the one hand, they try to keep mass support by certain small concessions to the needs and demands of the people. On the other, they answer the pressure and attacks of the reactionary forces by greater concessions in that direction. It is a fatal mistake to depend upon Roosevelt to check the attacks of Wall Street, or to advance the fundamental interests of the people.

WHERE then, Browder asked, can the people turn to find a protection against the reactionary forces that assail them? The great majority, he said, are not yet prepared to turn to Socialism, as represented either by the Socialist Party or the

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Communist Party. The Communists, therefore, come forward with an immediate program which the masses are ready to support. That immediate program arises out of the five fundamental aims of the masses as outlined above. This, Browder said, is not a program of revolutionary overthrow of capitalism; it can be realized within the framework of the present economic system by a people's government backed by the organized masses, determined to fight to keep Wall Street fascism out of power. This program is essentially covered by the platform adopted by the Farmer-Labor Party National Conference in Chicago on May 30-31.

The Communist Party, Browder said, had hoped to enter this year's elections with a Farmer-Labor national ticket. Already in May it had become clear that this was impossible. The Communist Party then proposed a joint presidential ticket to the Socialists. This offer was rejected. The Communist Party has no other alternative to choose in the presidential elections except to place in the field its own independent ticket,

This ticket will be placed in the service of creating that broader unity, the people's front. It will promote the growing mass movement in the states and congressional districts for Farmer-Labor tickets. The Communist campaign will be primarily on behalf of the people's front program. At the same time, the Party will carry on a mass campaign of education, on a scale never before attained, to teach the broad millions the meaning of socialism, of the working-class revolution, of the full Communist program which is the only final solution of the problems created for the population by a dying capitalist system.

The direct issue of the 1936 elections, Browder said, is not socialism or capitalism, but rather democracy or fascism. But he emphasized that a consistent struggle for democracy and progress leads inevitably, and in the not distant future, to the socialist revolution. On the basis of this analysis, he then summarized the parties and issues in the 1936 campaign as follows:

(1) The chief enemy of the peace, freedom and prosperity of the American people is the Republican Party and its reactionary allies. Hence we must defeat the Landon-Hearst-Liberty-League-Wall-Street alliance. (2) Roosevelt and his administration are retreating before the attacks of reaction and surrendering position after position to the main enemy. Hence we must stop the surrender of our rights and interests in Washington. (3) The Socialist Party, after breaking loose from its reactionary Old Guard, is moving into the backwater of doctrinaire sectarianism, drifting out of the mass currents of American life. Hence we must win the Socialists for the people's united front, for the Farmer-Labor Party. (4) The Farmer-Labor Party is rapidly growing in states and localities; it is organizing itself on a national scale. Hence we must support the program and platform of the Chicago Farmer-Labor Conference, build the Farmer-Labor Party. (5) The Communist Presidential ticket is the only banner in the national elections rallying and organizing all the forces of the people against reaction, fascism and war, building the people's front in the United States. Hence we should vote the Communist Presidential ticket.

The Communist Party, Browder concluded, must use the opportunity of this election campaign to smash once and for all the superstition, which has been embodied in a maze of court decisions having the force of law, that the Party is an advocate of force and violence. The Communist Party, he said, is not a conspirative organization, it is an open revolutionary party continuing the traditions of 1776 and 1861. It is a legal party and defends its legality.

As Browder ended his keynote address with the slogans: *through liberty to socialism; forward in the struggle for a new and better life for the masses; forward to a free, peaceful, prosperous and happy America:* the delegates and visitors rose and spontaneously broke into a stormy ovation that lasted twenty minutes.

OTHER speakers went into greater detail on the various problems covered by the keynote speech. Jack Stachel brilliantly analyzed developments in the trade union movement and the tasks of the Communists in these unions. James W. Ford, who received a thundering ovation, which contrasted sharply with the treatment of Negro delegates at the Republican and Democratic conventions, rendered a stirring report on the Party's work among the Negroes. Robert Minor analyzed the Party's fight against war. Clarence Hathaway, Minnesota-born editor of the Daily Worker, exposed the "vague promises" and "demagogy" of the Republican and Democratic farm planks, and urged as the Communist task the drawing of the trade unions closer to the farmers. Margaret Cowl and Mother Bloor, beloved 73-year old labor leader, reported on the struggles of the women; and Gil Green, secretary of the Young Communist League, on the youth.

An ovation full of affection was accorded to the 21-year old proletarian fighter and champion of the Negro people who was introduced as "our beloved and great Comrade Angelo Herndon." He spoke for a "united Negro people's movement together with white workers." Herbert Benjamin, Organization Secretary of the Workers Alliance, described the unification of leading unemployed organizations; and M. J. Olgin, editor of the Freiheit, drew a picture of widespread anti-semitic movements in the United States, their relation to fascism, and the growth of the united front among the Jewish masses.

One of the most important reports was made by Charles Krumbein, who described the new forms of Party organization, which are to follow the regular geographic lines of state, county and district, with a national committee along the broadest lines. Three fraternal delegates—Tim Buck of Canada, Hernan Laborde of Mexico and Antonio Rodriguez of Cuba—reported on developments in their respective countries and in the Communist parties they represented.

ALWAYS the speeches were factual, full of specific ideas, facing problems to be overcome, the careful discussion of victories achieved. You could go on like this for pages; for what was true of the main reports was equally true of the reports from the districts. You could have heard a pin drop when William Weinstone, Michigan organizer, discussed the Black Legion or John Williamson, Ohio organizer, described with a wealth of detail the trade union struggles in his district—Akron and Kent especially—and the consequent growth of a state Farmer-Labor Party; or when Roy Hudson described the struggles of the seamen and longshoremen and the need for a maritime industrial union.

As these paragraphs are being knocked off to catch a deadline, the Sunday New York Times comes into the office with the statement that the whole Democratic convention in Philadelphia "has been nothing but a build-up for the appearance of Franklin D. Roosevelt." At the Communist convention there were no staged effects. There was plenty of spontaneous cheering, sincere affection for leaders whose "build-up" has come through hard work. But the thing that stuck most in your mind, was the array of thought-out, serious reports on conditions in the United States and the Communist Party's actual work in trade unions, in central labor bodies, in organizations of the unemployed, Negroes, youth; in the organization of Farmer-Labor Parties on a local and state scale; in Socialist Party branches.

Earl Browder closed the convention, pointing to the "unshakable unity of our Party," its winning of the "confidence and respect of great masses of the people."

At Madison Square Garden, as I write, 25,000 gay, disciplined men and women, cheering and singing with an enthusiasm which makes all the other conventions this year look positively sick, are nominating Earl Browder, native Kansan, for President; and James W. Ford, Negro leader, for Vice-President of the United States on the Communist ticket. A platform is adopted which clearly and boldly proposes measures, in detail so specific that any worker or farmer can at once grasp its meaning. There is a full-throated response from a packed Garden to the platform's closing lines:

Today the immediate issue is democracy or fascism; but the consistent fight for democracy in the conditions of declining capitalism will finally bring us to the necessary choice of the socialist path.

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Roosevelt's Convention

MARGUERITE YOUNG

PHILADELPHA.

"WE meet . . . at a time . . . of great moment to the future of the Nation." President Roosevelt's urbane phrases traveled rhythmically across the playing ground. They struck and echoed sharp as arrows against the double tier of concrete seats slanting back and up into the sky over Franklin Field.

Pressed around him on the platform were the Boisterous Bourbons and the Tammany Tycoons who made the Democratic convention a five-day nauseum. In the front row sat their apotheosis, Cactus Jack Garner, banker and landlord and wheelhorse. His sharp red face was now expressionless and cold as ice. A moment ago, standing with Roosevelt before the cameras grinding in the newsreels' cage, Garner grinned. It was the same cynical grin as the one he wore when bibulously swapping stories with Republican cronies—in the complete bipartisan intimacy of Congressional leaders who serve the same masters under different party labels.

Yet at certain moments there at Franklin Field the heart expanded. One hundred thousand people were listening in those stands. The physical and spiritual impact of them, massed, silently intent upon a speech addressed directly to them and their fellow millions, lent the scene impressiveness, something the orgy in Convention Hall never could achieve.

Roosevelt adroitly made a class appeal based upon a falsehood. He used a simple device, the past tense where the present belonged. Kingdoms "were" built by "economic royalists," by grace of the economic enslavement of others. Hours and wages "had" passed beyond the control of the people. Political equality "was" meaningless in the face of the economic inequalities of modern monopoly.

But only up to the advent of the New Deal! Since 1932, the President smoothly pretended, *"It is being ended."* Ended by the New Deal, which, actually, buttressed monopoly.

Seeing it done, I gagged. Yet soon, I knew, throngs such as this would gather and hear their own political spokesmen express their need and their solution in a real people's party. It is the inescapable logic of the momentous "time" to which Roosevelt referred, a time of crystallizing class line-ups on the political as well as the economic front, and of clarification of issues despite all the old masters can do to prevent it.

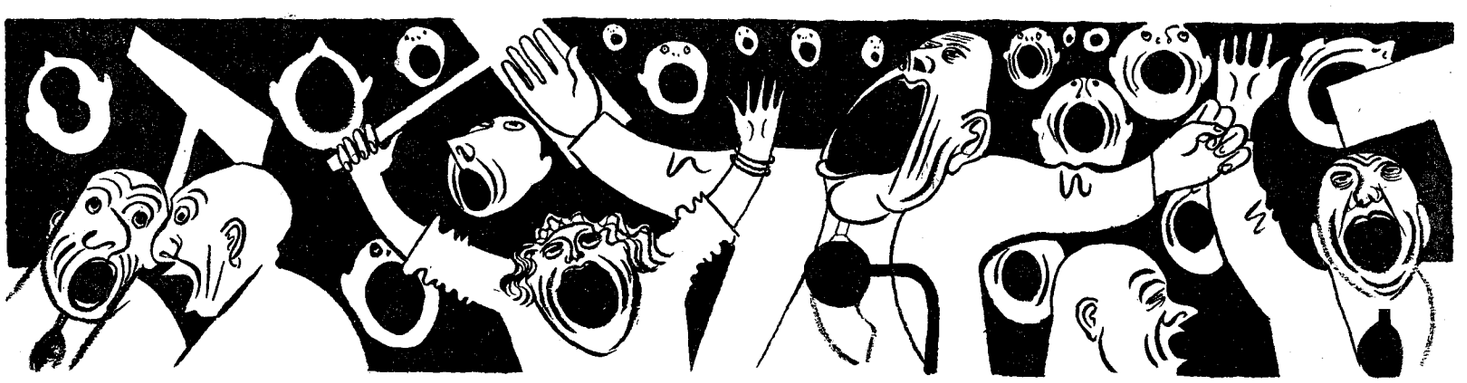
On Wednesday, already worn from the organized hullabaloo in the hall and individual hoopla along Broad Street through the night, the delegates assembled in a session that was turned literally into a vaudeville show. As they emerged, Congressman Byron Scott, a California Epic, remarked, "After all we have endured, they might have given us at least one fan dancer."

The resolutions committee was meeting in the auditorium ballroom. Senator Wagner solemnly announced they would hear everybody and then proceed to "write" the platform. Suppressed giggles at the press tables belied him. Everybody knew the platform had been drafted and would be redrafted if necessary in President Roosevelt's White House study. Solemnly, however, the platform builders sat together on the left side of the room. Less than half of them were present by the time the session got going, and these soon began to drift away. They were, on the whole, the typical stuff of the ancient machines of Tammany and Pendergast, plus New Deal camp followers who were essentially disinterested in the whole affair. The latter were prepared, regardless of personal inclinations, to follow Roosevelt's word. There were a few exceptions—such as Senators Black of Alabama and Bulkley of Ohio, who sought specific liberal planks; and Senators Bailey of North Carolina, Byrnes of South Carolina, Walsh of Massachusetts, equally determined upon extreme reaction as a matter of principle.

It was pouring rain. Soon the roof began to leak and water dropped from the ceiling. So sparsely occupied was the committee section that for hours no one noticed. Then a few casually shifted to other chairs. That was all. A subcommittee went into a back room to get to work on the proposals, theoretically, though the presentation was yet to be completed.

There appeared here a succession of witnesses such as never before seen at an old party's convention. Not only were there representatives of newer militant mass organizations . . . the Southern Tenant Farmers, the League against War and Fascism, Joe Curran and his seamen followers, there were spokesmen for long-established labor and liberal groups, raising demands that strikingly reflected the growing unity of the people upon minimum immediate guaranties against the reaction that cuts ever wider swaths. Here came an old pacifist clergyman, raising, verbatim, a slogan that appears in the Communist platform of 1936: "Keep America out of war by keeping war out of the world!" A woman speaking for the National Woman's Party, once opposed to protective legislation for women on principle, now underscored that their desire for sex equality did not mean they opposed minimum-wage legislation for all. They did not volunteer it, but inquiry disclosed that the New York minimum-wage decision has set the faces of increasing numbers of this group toward a positive labor program; only thus, they began to perceive, can they safeguard equal rights. Here likewise spoke a woman long associated with the Consumers' League, seeking minimum wages guaranteed by Constitutional Amendment. That was the central popular demand, Constitutional Amendment. It reached a climax with Heywood Broun's soft, round voice booming over the microphone: "The Newspaper Guild feels that any plank adopted by the Democratic party in regard to collective bargaining will be inadequate without an additional plank favoring a constitutional amendment to protect labor in its right to organize."

Reporters dropped their tools to clap! They cheered Broun again when he uttered fighting words, such as the Democratic



Gus Peck

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sachems would not. The latter minced words at Hearst, the Liberty League and Fascism in the Republican party. Broun put it bluntly, as the rostrum praters did not: "An editor named William Randolph Hearst has some connection with the candidacy of the Republican nominee, Alf Landon. This same gentleman is also probably connected with the campaign of Representative Lemke. As they say at the race tracks, we think Landon and Lemke are an entry—both boys riding in the yellow silks of San Simeon."

Because of the play of these outside forces, and the abysmal apathy of the convention toward them, the scene could not be witnessed without the sharpest ambivalence. The rumblings from the outside stirred the vast majority of the delegates not at all. Vaguely they sensed trouble. But they would not face the immediate situation resulting from the Liberty League Five's bolt and the Lemke candidacy, much less the problems arising for the future from the gathering mass pressures expressed in the platform hearings. But for the contingent from the Far West with their production-for-use call, muted and muddled, and the Negro contingent's abject clamor for something, anything, to entice their most menaced group, the flesh and blood of this Democracy was the same brutal, backward personnel as gathered at Cleveland, only some were more primitive.

Friday night, just before Senator Robinson stepped up to the microphone and asked the last of the 57 Roosevelt seconders to compress their remarks, I strolled down around the floor. They were leading the donkey into the hall. Twice the animal forgot where he was. But across the front of the hall, before the platform, he was coaxed. Then they mounted a young girl on the donkey and a boy started leading him back across the hall. Seeing what had happened, the boy grabbed up a bundle of newspapers and went dropping them before him. The ladies in the front rows tittered.

I PASSED a congressman-delegate. "What are you doing?" he was asking a passerby. "Not promoting votes for the District of Columbia?" And when asked, "Why not?" he replied violently, "We don't want that! We don't want all them damned Niggers running things."

Among the South Carolina delegation, they were holding a hog-calling contest. "Whaaa—hoo," yelled South Carolina's Secretary of Pardons, T. R. Smith, into the microphone. "Whaa—hoo!" screamed South Carolina's Delegate Dr. Fishburn. They reeled. They shouted. Somebody mistook the doctor for the Governor of South Carolina. He was quick to protect the honor of his executive: "I'll be god-damned if I'm the guvnah!" Beside them in the suffocating press stood the two who started it on a bet, a Minnesota hog-raiser and a South Carolina Congressman.

"You better not put this in the paper," the Congressman suddenly said. "It might cost me a few votes 'cause somebody's liable to swear I was drunk."

President Green of the American Federation of Labor submissively offered the same tepid requests he asked at Cleveland, with one exception. He omitted opposition to minimum wages for men. Still he espoused the same reactionary plans, the Red-baiting demands of Hearst himself, that drew a salvo from the extreme reactionaries of the Committee. His call for withdrawal of recognition of the Soviet Union and for deportation of alien "subversives," was something that could be, and was, applauded by Congressman Fuller of Arkansas, the southern gentleman who made page one by complaining to the House that Vassar girls were thinking of having sons, but not for soldiers.

I FOLLOWED Green into the hall to ask him where he got his mandate for his position against the Russian workers' government. He shrugged.

"As a matter of fact, you had no mandate from the A.F. of L. convention for that?" I asked.

"No," he said, "but labor has gone on record." He could not remember when.

"In fact, the last convention severely reproved Matthew Woll for the same thing—for his Red-baiting American Civic Federation activities, which are essentially the same thing you are doing here?"

Again he shrugged. He said, "I don't count that in."

Green bubbled a belief that, "If we had just one other liberal judge, the Supreme Court decisions might go the other way."

Another liberal judge or so! That was the sum of Roosevelt's intentions, so far as platform concessions to the left were concerned, until the very eve of his five-day bicycle race. His original draft, everything here confirmed, evaded the Supreme Court veto altogether. The intention was to dodge it with a whispered hint of appointing judges who would properly interpret the New Deal as being "within the Constitution." Then last Monday, two days before the shouting began, John L. Lewis went to the White House. He took one look at the platform and blew up. He was quoted by those who should know as telling Roosevelt: "Mr. President, for the first time in the history of this country, the Presidential election is going to be a class fight." He reminded Roosevelt that the money bags were against him, and also, according to the calculation of Democratic strategists, over eighty percent of the metropolitan press. He added, "You've got nowhere to go but to the common people."

It was after that conference, in which Lewis apparently was assured that a flat declaration for an amendment would be included, that another United Mine Workers official appeared here confidently predicting such a plank. That was Wednesday morning. But upon the protests of the southern Tories, it was jerked in and out and around, until it emerged, a compromise mentioning amendment "if necessary." Such as it was, it constituted a concession to the one Roosevelt-supporting group that *demanded* something. It showed the possibility of *independent* people's organizations pushing even Roosevelt to a stand he would not otherwise choose against onrushing reaction. In this and in the formal declarations of federal responsibility for unemployment "insurance" à la the present social security fake, and for wage and hour and other social legislation, and in the striking omission of blunt war-building commitments, lay the main difference between the Democratic and Republican platforms. All the rest, the farm and anti-monopoly and sound currency and civil rights phrases, are so much hokum, deliberately phrased so as to permit the President to move as fast Left or Right as may be expedient. That is not merely my conviction: it was the free expression of the several Industrial Organization union men, and of the wee liberal delegates to whom I spoke. Said one, "The platform is really just an open door. The question is now, who will push Roosevelt, and how fast? If he comes across, it would mean a new Democratic party. If he doesn't, it means a Farmer-Labor party in 1940, without question."

I had heard the wishful thought expressed by every liberal Roosevelt follower in the arena—the thought that now the Democratic party would transform itself at the wafting of the Roosevelt wand. What I wanted to know was whether the leadership of his labor following would *act* for a showdown, and in time.

"We've got no choice about it," said the union leader. "We are right up against it now, in the steel organizing drive. If our right to organize is guaranteed there, it will mean a labor movement which will develop its own political weapon either in or outside of the Democratic Party. If Roosevelt fails in steel, it is certain to develop outside the Democratic Party."

It was the wonder of Philadelphia that even here on the Democratic ramparts one found the abiding conviction that this was but a prelude to 1940. Once you got off the floor of the hall and talked to the Roosevelt voter, you heard that clear and sober statement everywhere: We know we can't depend on him; only better the negative than the immediate offensive that we know would follow a Landon victory. That was the reason why the heart filled at the mass response in Franklin Field to Roosevelt's words: "The average man once more confronts the problem that faced the minute man of '76. . . . The economic royalists complain that we seek to overthrow the institutions of America. . . . Our allegiance to American institutions requires the overthrow of this kind of power." You knew that the mass determination upon it was dawning, and would develop despite and in a sense because of the contradiction between the speaker's word and his deed.

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Two Lithographs

ELIZABETH OLDS

LEFT "BROKERS"

BELOW
"MISS MANCHESTER'S MUSICAL PROGRAM FOR HOMELESS MEN"
WPA Federal Art Project

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Myth of the Free Public Library

JEAN SIMON and PAUL REYNOLDS

"The free public library is a distinctly American contribution to civilization. . . ."
President Roosevelt, in his radio address to the Friends of the A.L.A. Library Luncheon (from which Negro delegates were excluded).

TEACHERS and campaign orators are fond of quoting the saga of Abraham Lincoln, who walked many miles in wind and rain to borrow—and return—a tattered copy of the *Life of George Washington*. Those were pioneer days. The inference is, of course, that today, under our "distinctly American" library system, books are everywhere available for those who can read them.

This cherished myth of the democratic Free Public Library—the slogan of the American Library Association is "the greatest number of books for the greatest number of people"—was definitely exposed, as such, at the recent conference of librarians which was held in Richmond, Virginia. The desperate plight of the libraries ran like a disturbing stream through the entire convention, burying itself temporarily in endless reports on cataloguing and microphotography, public documents, bibliography, rising again in meetings on Federal aid to libraries, rural library service, adult education.

In the keynote opening address by Louis Round Wilson, president of the A.L.A., it rose like a flood, rousing the delegates, assembled to hear a polite speech of welcome, from the half stupor engendered by Richmond heat and habitual inertia. One delegate fainted and was carried out, and still Dr. Wilson continued quietly with his politely damning analysis:

> . . . until 1929 all our energies were absorbed in the expression of library activities incident to the rise of library incomes. Then with a suddenness that was breath-taking we were plunged into the most profound depression America has known. . . . In this maelstrom library revenues dropped to unprecedented depths, circulation mounted to unprecedented heights. . . . The first task which confronts the A.L.A. today is to provide library service to the 45,000,000 people who are now without it. . . .

Those who shuddered when news reached them that Nazi Germany, in an attempt to cauterize its economic and political wounds, burned books may find worthy of consideration the fact that under our present "distinctly American" library system 45,000,000 Americans (or one person in three) have no access to books at all so far as public library facilities are concerned. Over 80 percent of the people of North Dakota, Arkansas and West Virginia are without library service. The same tragic situation holds true for 60 to 80 percent of the population in thirteen states, from 40 to 60 percent in eleven states, from 20 to 40 percent in ten states. In the remaining eleven states 20 percent are without such service. Of the estimated 55,000,000 of our rural population 40,000,000 people are without libraries.

According to American Library Association estimates, adequate library service demands a minimum of one dollar per capita per year. Yet in 1935 the country spent only 37 cents per capita. The expenditure of certain southern states is indicative of an appalling and cynical disregard of the cultural needs of human beings: Mississippi and Arkansas, 2 cents; New Mexico, 5 cents; Alabama, North Carolina, West Virginia, Louisiana, 6 cents. (When we realize that in the South Negroes are not permitted to use the public library except in Jim Crow branches we can only assume that under such pitifully small appropriations, Negroes have no library facilities whatsoever except in a few large cities.) Only ten states in the United States spent more than half the necessary minimum. Massachusetts, with an expenditure of $1.08, ranked highest.

Only $10,000,000 has been added to the library income from 1925-1935 but the increase in book circulation has been 215,000,000. Books have been used 200 percent more but there has been an increase of only 45 percent in library income. While hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent for "defense," public libraries received a bare $45,000,000 in 1935.

Obviously then, the A.L.A.'s avowed democratic aim of "the greatest number of books for the greatest number of people," and, they did not neglect to add, "at the least possible cost," is still mere convention talk. With budgets cut to the bone the librarian finds himself faced with the problem: books for whom? services for whom? Some librarians find it simple enough to make a choice. Ralph Munn, director of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, categorically stated that branch libraries in slum areas were not a "proper charge of a public library." He suggested that such work might be turned over to the Salvation Army! Perhaps Mr. Munn's too intimate contact with the Mellons and his other steel corporation trustees has somewhat dulled his social viewpoint.

At an Adult Education roundtable at Richmond, to which librarians eagerly flocked to participate in what promised to be one of the few free discussions, this problem of inadequate appropriations faced them at every turn. In the midst of much fine talk on expanding the functions of the library to adult educational movement [illegible] Flexner, readers' adviser of the [illegible]rk Public Library, protested the futi[illegible]eaching out for new readers when libr[illegible] unable to take care of readers on their own doorsteps. It becomes clear then that in the American free public library system, as in American education generally, democracy is still a luxury.

WHAT is to be done? Before the convention had closed many librarians were reaching their own conclusions. Dr. Frank P. Graham, president of the University of North Carolina, suggested that wealth should be taxed to provide for the "45,000,000 Americans now without books." In some cities committees of workers and professionals have organized to demand larger appropriations to provide adequate library facilities for themselves and their children. The A.L.A. is definitely committed to a demand for Federal aid. But the ultimate answer to the problem is militant organization of the rank-and-file librarians themselves who, realizing that their situation is inseparable from the public which they wish to serve, will demand, as part of their professional program, sufficient appropriations for (1) the service to the public, which includes not only books but adequate personnel; (2) better wages and working conditions for themselves; (3) security in the form of tenure and pensions.

At present, the number of militant staff associations is small when compared with those in other professions. Everyone knows that Library employes are notoriously underpaid, but the general public scarcely can be expected to realize the pressure under which most of them work. The increase in the number of borrowers and in book circulation, the curtailment of staffs either by firing or failure to hire more workers to meet the growing needs have resulted—to borrow a term from industry—in terrific speed-up. The resentment of library workers was expressed in a letter recently written by an indignant librarian to The Wilson Bulletin:

> But don't we work? All the calloused feet, the broken arches, the roughened, ink-stained hands, are painful proof. As for the air we breathe, the dirty books we handle, long hours and low pay checks, our working conditions and scale of living are not far above those of the proletariat we are supposed to scorn. . . .

Some official figures recorded in the
can Library Association Bulletin
1935, might serve as further "pa
Among the professional librar
largest single group is the
tant. According to the A.I
is one who has had (1)
plus a year of professiona
including a year of profes
(3) an informal educatio
real equivalent of four ye
plus five years of experie
recognized professional st

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Just what do these highly-trained professional assistants receive in dollars and cents? They work, on an average, forty hours a week. Their schedules are abominable; few of them work less than one night a week, many two or three nights. For this they receive from $540 a year (as in Muskogee, Oklahoma, population: 32,026) to $2,640 (as in New York City). This maximum of $2,640, which is received by incredibly few, is astonishingly small in comparison with maximum salaries in other professions. And New York City also pays many of its professional assistants as low as $1,320 a year. Boston pays salaries ranging from a minimum of $870 to a maximum of $1,510; Birmingham, from $851 to $1,027. Tampa pays as little as $600; Kansas City, $760. A rough national average might fall between $20 to $25 per week—a munificent recompense for the expensive investment in training. And the salaries of clerical workers and other non-professionals are proportionately lower.

In the Committee's report the observation that "in a majority of cities librarians are expected to consider gentility and love of work to be a large part of their compensation" is indeed a depressing commentary. But this may explain why librarians have not organized as widely as their fellow professionals in the schools, social services, newspapers, etc. While teachers marched on City Hall, librarians meekly submitted to pay cuts and outrageous speed-up. It is necessary to remember the composition of the average library staff to understand this. Library work has always been considered the ideal way of life for the minister's daughter, the "bookish" girl, the spinster dependents of the richest trustee, with all the implications of their tradition.

But this type of personnel is rapidly changing. The influx into the profession of young, trained workers, many of whom have waited on tables to support themselves through college, of young men who find other professions more and more difficult of entry, of the W.P.A. workers, trained in militant action, working shoulder to shoulder with the professionals, is creating a new type of librarian —one who thinks in terms of organization and protection for himself and his fellow workers, rather than of "gentility and love of work."

One of the clearest indications of the growing importance of organization among librarians—more euphoniously termed, for library consumption, "staff associations"—is the fact that for the first time a meeting was called at an A.L.A. convention to discuss staff-association policies. The wide response to the call surprised even its sponsors. Answers to the questionnaire distributed at a staff association dinner indicated that the staff associations had gone far beyond the stage when they existed primarily to plan picnics and compile lists. Staff associations are now recognized as a definite means of protecti pensions, improving working conditions, ra ing salaries, establishing credit unions and f *compelling increased appropriations*—for t dual task of protecting themselves and pı viding adequate service to the public.

Some of these young organizations alrea have a history of struggle behind thei The Library Workers Union of the Ne York Public Library, with a membersh drawn chiefly from pages and stack boys, w organized to combat wage-cuts and dismissa and to obtain better conditions. The Ne York Public Library Staff Association, com posed of professional workers, has succeede in creating out of an inflexible, half-moribun Staff Association, one of the truly representa tive and democratic staff organizations in the library world. (It is significant of the chang here, that at the moment the Union is con templating a merger with the professiona organizations.) The Library Discussion Grou of Seattle, by an active program of publicit and education, succeeded in forestalling budget cut. The first Librarian's Unio has been chartered under the A.F. of L (local 19178) at Butte, Montana. "I d not think it is possible," writes the secretar in The Wilson Bulletin for June, "to descri the feeling of security that came to us, wh we knew that we had backing in our fig for the only free institution available everyone in our community."

Letter from Spain

JOSE DIAZ

MADRID.

WHY IS THERE such a campaign of slander against the People's Front of Spain? Spanish history immediately preceding the People's Front victory provides the answer, because it situates the People's Front in its true relation to the struggles of the Spanish people: it shows it to be the hope of a new Spain.

In October, 1934, the Spanish proletariat rose in a great general strike against the attempted coup by the CEDA, the fascist Catholic party representing the old monarchist castes. This attempted seizure of power was in direct violation of popular will. In some regions, such as Asturias, the strikes turned into armed uprisings. And all of the Spanish masses regarded with active sympathy everything that was done to block the inquisitorial bands of Lerroux and Gil Robles who, when they did seize power, furiously persecuted not only revolutionists but men of such republican prestige as Manuel Azana.

Upon the defeat of the October movement, all of the laws promulgated by the Republic which favored the interests of the workers and the poor people were revoked. In their place others were adopted, contrary to the spirit of the republican constitution. More than 30,000 *yunteros*[1] were expelled from the lands they had been working. Taxes on small proprietors were increased and tenant farmers were evicted by the thousands, while landowners were allowed to retain individual estates of sometimes more than 25,000 hectares. Property of those land-barons who had taken part in revolutionary plots against the Republic in August, 1932, and whose land had been confiscated at that time by the government, was restored to them. Wages for agricultural labor, which had been raised with the advent of the Republic to an average of from five to six pesetas a day, were cut during the period of the Rightist government to one peseta, 50 centimos for a sunrise-to-sunset workday—the legally fixed eight-hour day having also been liquidated. (A loaf of bread costs on the average 0.65 pesetas in Spain.)

One and a half million were unemployed. Fifteen thousand workers were thrown out of work for refusing to parrot the ideas of their employers and the government. Thirty tho sand workers, and others of Leftist sympathi were buried in the country's jails; five tho sand were shot dead during the military pression of the Asturias movement. Ma were the victims of infamies committed detention cells and *calabozos*. An instance this was the death of Luis de Sirval, arrest while working as a newspaper man, a killed shortly after in his prison cell.

The Republic had deprived the Catho hierarchy of its state subsidy: but the Rig ists re-assigned it 470,000,000 pesetas a y "Affaires" such as the scandalous case of *"Straperlo"*[2] abounded.

In March, 1935 the Rightists passed law on rural rents which caused the ev tion of more than 100,000 tenant farme from lands which they had long cultivate In Biscay alone, a community of 2,000 pe ants, which had held its farms for over century, was rendered landless.

This was the state of affairs when t

[1] A *yuntero* is an agricultural laborer who owns a team of mules but no land.

[2] The *Straperlo* case involved graft to men high government positions in return for granti gambling concessions.

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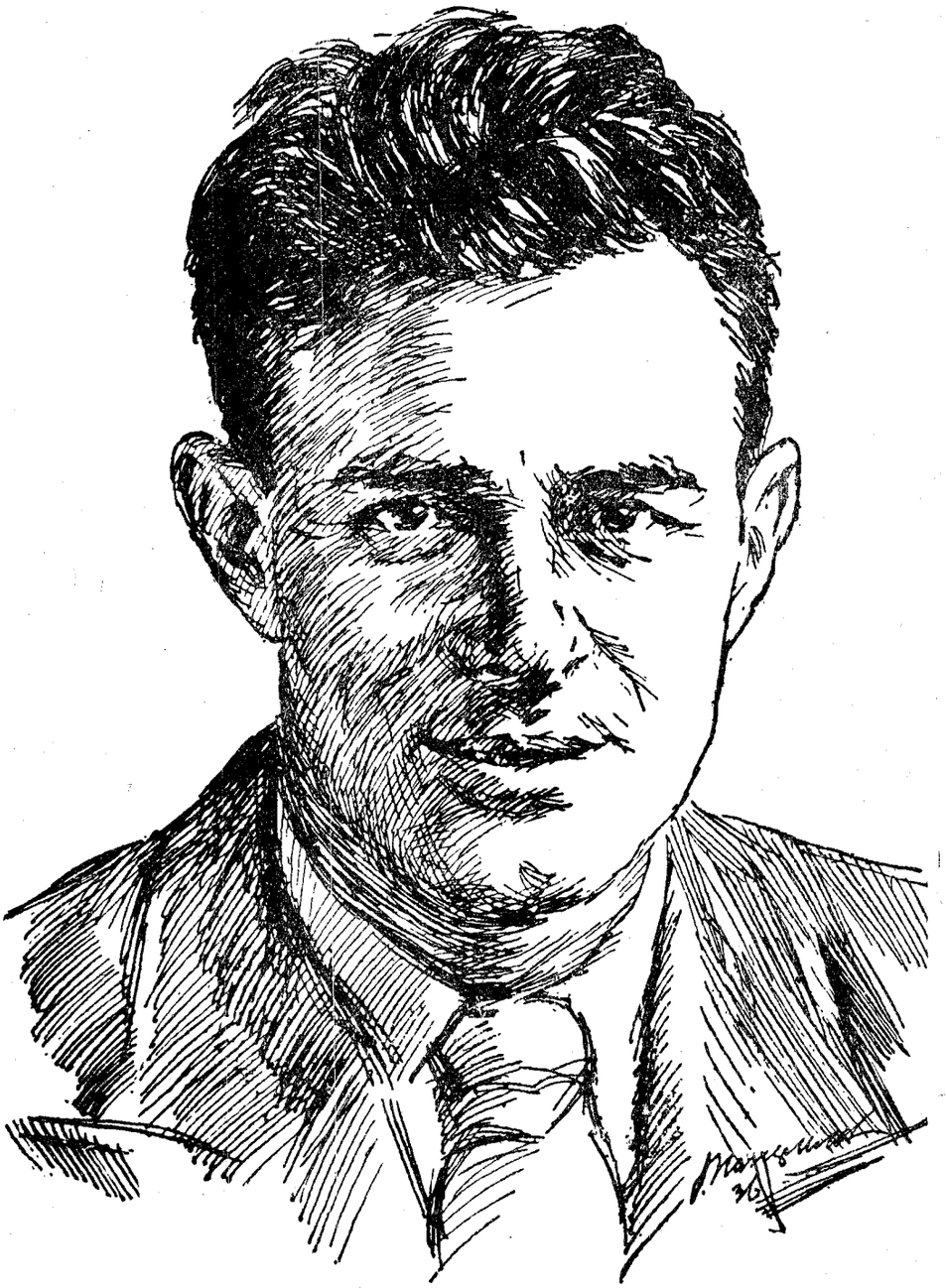
ommunist Party of Spain proposed that all ıe popular and democratic forces in the coun- ry unite in a people's anti-fascist bloc to alt the sweep of reaction that was menacing verything honorable and democratic in Span- ɜh life. Once organized, the People's Front ttained such enormous force that it rode to ictory over countless obstacles in the elec- ions of February 16, 1936. Neither govern- nental intimidation nor the "slush fund" of he reactionaries nor the employers' threat o discharge all Left voters was able to save he forces of retrogression. A government was established which pledged itself before the whole country to the fulfillment of the pro- gram signed by all the parties in the People's Front. Among other things it pledged:

> Amnesty for social-political prisoners;
> Restoration to their former employment of all workers and functionaries who had been victims of the October reprisals;
> Pensions for the widows and orphans and those who had been incapacitated by the Octo- ber terror;
> Guarantee to enforce the Republican consti- tution;
> Punishment of those responsible for the tor- tures which accompanied the repression in Asturias;
> Protection of the poor peasants:
> Abolition of usury and the lowering of rents and taxes on land;
> The fostering of the teaching of modern agri- cultural methods;
> Abolition of the Rightist law on rents and protection and fostering of small rural land- holdings;
> Restoration of possessions which had been taken away from peasant communities;
> Reestablishment of social legislation;
> Construction of schools and establishment of a system of lay education.

This program is a far cry from the "social volution" with which the Rightists are try- g to scare the more moderate Republican ımp, and to alienate certain democratic forces ı other countries. To apply this program *ould simply mean to undo the injustices of* he former regime, to exact responsibility from ıose who committed those injustices, and to ive Spain a regime which is more in har- nony with the spirit of modern times. It vould mean raising the country's cultural evel, and liquidating the remnants of the niddle ages which the Rightists are obstinately ent on perpetuating.

The government has begun to apply this ·ogram—although slowly, much too slowly. is confronted with the resistance of the actionaries, who are going to all lengths in ıeir attempt to divorce the toiling masses :om it. Big employers are shutting down heir plants and are refusing through vari- ıus subterfuges to accept the decisions of the ·overnment. Large landowners are leaving ıeir lands untilled rather than give employ- ent to the hungry thousands of agricultural .borers. The assassinations of prominent .eftist leaders are planned; gangsters are rmed and sent out among the people to ›rovoke violence.

The public naturally becomes irritated— particularly when magistrates free arrested



JOSE DIAZ

provocateurs, or deal out ridiculously small sentences—and the people are sometimes led to direct intervention in order to put an end to this state of things.

The aim of the provocateurs is clear. They seek to disrupt the unity of the popular forces in Spain. They attempt to flaunt the dis- turbances which reaction itself brings about, before the whole world, with the accusation that the Leftists cannot preserve order. They call upon the government to break with the working-class parties, whom they accuse of trying to submerge the country in violence and chaos. They try to horrify the more moderate Republicans with the specter of so- cial revolution, of Bolshevism. They warn of the assassination of all citizens by the Bol- sheviks, and spread tales of that sort which no one with half a brain would believe.

If it is true that some churches have been burned, it is no less true that many of these were burned by their owners in order to jus- tify campaigns of repression and slander against the Left. Other burnings, far fewer in number, resulted from justified although at times ill-considered actions of the people themselves, aroused because they had been fired upon from the churches, or because church buildings served as havens for the fascist agitators and their gunmen.

We Communists do not deny that we fight for a Workers' and Peasants' Government in Spain. Nevertheless we will support the pres- ent government with all the forces at our command, as long as it carrès out the pro- gram agreed upon and knovn to the entire Spanish people. We are determined that our country shall cease to be a semi-feudal realm under the despotic control of an ancient no- bility. We want to raise it to the level of the cultured peoples of the world who are today fighting for peace and progress.

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Remnants of the Past

JOSHUA KUNITZ

MY outburst against the romantic lovers of the revolution has a salutary effect, perhaps a bit too salutary. One tourist in the coupé recalls that he was handled rather bureaucratically by an Intourist official. Another saw a beggar in Moscow. A third was annoyed with a waiter who was angling for a tip, a fourth is perturbed by what he thinks are excessive manifestations of patriotism. Of course, they are not romanticists. Of course, they do not generalize. Of course, they realize that these things are neither typical nor permanent. Indeed, they declare that they have found the Soviet Union "marvelous and inspiring," that "it made one want to live and struggle and change the world," that "it restored one's faith in man and one's belief in man's noble destiny." And they say it with such an air, as if they were the first fluttering souls to have sensed this great yet so elusive truth. . . . Still they do want to know why the unpleasant things they have mentioned persist in a socialist country. "It's a little disappointing, don't you think?" queries the "authoress."

I know most of these people are going back to America. I know that every one of them, among friends and acquaintances, will become a center of disseminating news and views, sound and unsound, about the Soviet Union. And though I hate to dwell on the negative aspects of Soviet life—they are so transitory, so minor, when lifted out of the whole magnificent context of Soviet life—they can be so misleading; and though I am hoarse with talking and quite exhausted, I feel it is my duty patiently to carry on. Before long—in Poland—our little group will be broken up. Meanwhile, during the few brief hours at our disposal, I find that reading from my Soviet diary—from the year 1928 to the present—the least tiring method of meeting the ger pressure for information and elucidation. I read the notes haphazardly, as I turn the pages, stopping most frequently on those which have some reference to the questions my interlocutors have been raising.

TWO BAREFOOT youngsters and a dog attach themselves to us and lead us through the Park of Culture and Rest.

"What kind of a dog is this?" asks one of my group.

The taller boy, the owner: "Japanese."

His little companion: "Siberian."

The taller one, with authoritative finality: "My father says it is Japanese."

The little one, imperturbably: "And I say it is Siberian; it can't be Japanese."

The taller one: "Do you think you know more than my father?"

The little one, in basso profundo: "Sure. If your dog were Japanese, our Soviet dogs would have torn it to little pieces long ago."

The taller one, triumphantly: "But he is not a Japanese *bourgeois* dog, not a Japanese *imperialist* one; he is a Japanese *proletarian* dog."

The little one is beaten. He is now willing to admit that the dog may be Japanese after all.

AUGUST, 1936. Hotel Metropole. "The most unfavorable impression one gets of the Soviet Union," complains the peppery little lady, "is in these Intourist hotels. The uniformed flunkies and waiters hovering all about you, scraping their feet, bowing, smiling ingratiatingly, and always looking at the palm of your hand—they're utterly disgusting." "I had imagined that human dignity was restored in the Soviet Union. I can't understand it. I don't know how to behave in their presence. The Communists, I am told, are opposed to tipping. Well, I have tried to follow the best Communist precepts. It's difficult. I am in a Bolshevik country and I absolutely and demonstratively refuse to hand out gratuities to these fellows." After a little pause, jokingly, "They ought to shoot a few of them as an example."

"Shoot!" It sounds familiar. In 1928, when as a member of an educational delegation I first entered the Soviet Union, my reaction to some of the people in the Europa Hotel in Leningrad was exactly the same. I recall vividly the old doorman, his luxurious, carefully-nurtured gray beard, his gorgeous black uniform glittering with gold buttons, gold embroidered collar and sleeves, he stood there for hours, erect, opening and closing doors efficiently, snappily, saluting the richly appareled foreigners sauntering in and out. The old man had been doorman of the same hotel for decades, opening doors, saluting princes, counts, generals, ambassadors, merchants, their bejewelled ladies and their arrogant daughters. For years he had lived a life of reflected glory. In some way he must have felt linked to a great, sparkling world, to the mighty of this earth. He had come to love the ritual connected with his job. It gave him a sense of dignity and self-importance. And even now, in the new world of proletarian dictatorship, the old doorman took great pride in practising the proprieties of his profession. Every time I passed he bowed, flung the door open and saluted—I was well-dressed, a foreigner, a member of an American professors' delegation. The old man had not the least doubt that I accepted his courtesies as something quite due me, and he was indeed pleased to shower them upon me, tip or no tip. I recall his painful astonishment when I once stopped to talk to him in Russian, addressing him as *Tovarisch* (Comrade). Was he pleased? Hardly. He was disdainful, he tually felt cheated. I was not an import foreigner after all! I spoke Russian. Perh I was even a Bolshevik. I called h *Tovarisch!* After that the old man delib ately snubbed me. But instead of be amused, I was irritated: "A lackey . . . s of a lackey. . . . A shame they have such sp mens working in Soviet hotels . . . ought shoot such people. . . ."

That was long ago, under the N.E.P. had since come to understand many thin which seemed inexplicable then.

"What I can't see," continues the litt lady, "is why, in the nineteenth year of t Revolution, tipping and servility should be t erated. Of course, I realize that as a forei tourist I see these things in concentrated for I have no doubt that, in relation to the r of Soviet life, these negative things are ra But these things are so ugly; they can be moved so easily. Just pass a law prohibiti them and then proceed to enforce the la There is no reason why waiters should not prohibited from accepting tips if they are p well. They certainly can be stopped, and necessary punished. Take your old doorm Why did they have to put such a man i place where he was bound to make a impression on every new arrival in the So Union?"

As delicately as I can manage, I sug that it were well if tourists freed themse of the notion that the Soviet Union as a show place and that Stalin, the munists, the People's Commissars walk ar in the Kremlin puckering their brows, ing their hai , worrying how every little tail in the c untry might impress critical t ists. There is a Five Year Plan to at to, there are complicated foreign relations the Red Army to worry about, there the railroads and the heavy and light inc tries to watch over, there are collective state farms to take care of, there are th sands of other major tasks. If the tourist not impressed with the accomplishments these fields, and if he insists on dwelling minutiae, it may not be the fault of t Soviets after all. In that case the tour had better make a self-critical excursion i his own mental labyrinth.

Furthermore, to get back to the subj keeping the old waiters and the old doorm in the hotels is not a matter of choice, of necessity. At present there is absolu no way of inducing new people to train personal service jobs. Why should they? doors of schools and factories and offices wide open. There are endless opportun for more attractive work. For instance, t is a veritable "barber crisis" in the So Union. People don't want to be barb

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ere are no office boys in the Soviet Union. / friend Herman Michelson observed very ıtely that the reason the Soviet offices are slow-moving is that the work which in ›italist countries is performed by young- rs is here being performed by graybeards old women. The Soviet government is present not especially interested in tearing ung people away from essential jobs to train ɛm to be waiters and porters, barbers and ormen. It is all a question of relative im- ·tance. An electrician or a tractor driver is ll infinitely more essential to the country's ·ll-being than a waiter. Fortunately there e old waiters available, specialists, experts, ho do not disdain rendering personal services ıd who are neither fit nor willing to do any- ıing else. These people are happiest and ıost useful in their old jobs. Unquestionably, ɛars of servility under the old regime had emoralized them. They cannot resist a per- ɔnal gratuity, even if it is against the rules.)ischarging a waiter for an infringement of ıis rule would be a futile gesture. He ·ouldn't be of much use anywhere else. And ıother worker would have to be taken out of job to be trained for a long period and put ıto this job. An obvious social waste, even such a worker could be found.

Some day, perhaps not too distant, Soviet ·ciety's attitude in this matter is bound to ange and any socially useful work will be ·ouraged. But the time is not yet ripe. e whole thing is complicated by other de- s. Wages in the Soviet Union are not high enough to lessen the temptation of aining an additional few rubles a day. Sev- l years must elapse before such a level of omic well-being is attained. Besides, not y tourist coming into the Soviet Union an equally lofty conception of human dig- . Many cling to the tipping evil out of *it or out of a desire to feel generous* or of hope of obtaining better service. The rage waiter or doorman would have to be ·ery firm and principled Communist to rn tips. And the overwhelming majority the old hotel personnels are certainly not ıt.

The lady is satisfied. She suggests that such explanation should be posted in every room the Intourist hotels.

MINERALNIE VODY, summer of 1928. I was on the railroad station aiting for the train to Baku. The place as deserted. The ticket seller sat yawn- ɜ behind his little window. Having nothing do, I sauntered over and asked him when · train was due. The fellow, a middle- ·d Russian with a typical peasant face, let of his infinitely long moustache for a ment, stared straight over my head and in reezingly official voice announced: "Tickets sold here; information is given over there." ıad to go to the other side of the station. hat an annoyance . . . surely he had the *ɔrmation . . . stupid bureaucracy. . . .*

I discovered that I had three hours, and decided to go out to take a look at the town. I went over to the baggage room and handed in my three bags, my hat and cane. Five pieces in all—one ruble. After the elderly clerk had laboriously made out the receipt, I changed my plans a little.

"Would you mind giving me back the hat and cane?" I asked.

"I'm sorry, but I can't give them to you now," he replied as he began to take them off the counter.

"But I have changed my mind. I want to take them along."

"Citizen, if you want your hat and cane, you'll have to take all the five objects back." He shoved all the things in my direction.

"But I don't want all the five things; I want only two." I shoved the three bags back to him.

"But I can't give you only two; you'll have to take all the five."

I was in a quandary. The old man took pity on me. His face became a little less austere. He proposed a solution:

"I'll tell you. If you want the hat and cane, you first take all the five objects back [he pushed the three bags back to me]. I will file the ruble receipt, then you will pay sixty more kopecks and I will give you a receipt for three objects, you will give me the three bags, and you will keep the hat and cane."

I was fascinated by the old codger's arithmetic: one ruble for five objects; but one ruble and sixty kopecks for three! It was no use arguing. I became party to this absurd transaction.

Later I complained to a Russian fellow-traveler. His explanation was very reasonable: "Yes, we still suffer from bureaucracy. Sabotage of class enemies is one cause. Overwork is another. The still inadequate organization of trade and industry [it was 1928, you will remember] is a third. But the main cause is the death and the emigration of hundreds of thousands of experienced people—merchants, professionals, officials—who disappeared from our economic and social life; they have been replaced by hundreds of thousands of new, inexperienced workers drawn suddenly from field and factory into various clerical, administrative and executive jobs. These people are still raw. They're unused to handling others. They still lack the quickness of mind, the pliancy, the ability of rapid orientation and immediate decision which comes with experience and the consequent confidence in one's knowledge. Obviously under such circumstances it's easier and safer to err on the side of literalness and rigidity than on the side of venturesome interpretation of rules. Take the ticket clerk you have complained about. To prevent long lines of people jostling before his window, asking millions of questions and interfering with the expeditious sale of tickets, that fellow was instructed, I suppose, not to dispense any information, but just to attend to his job of selling tickets. *It was a sound rule, if you know anything* about our Russian folk and our traditional love for endless questions and discussions. But the fellow—and that also applies to your baggage clerk—must have been new in his job and he quite naturally tended to enforce the rule too rigidly, at the expense of common sense and courtesy. Next time you come to Mineralnie Vody, let's say a year or two hence, you'll find those officials quite changed."

(One of my auditors shrewdly observes that this cause of bureaucracy, like deliberate sabotage, has been almost removed through the intensified training and experience provided by the two successful five year plans. "They used to break tractors; now they make them and run them. The same with handling people. They've learned and are still learning.")

Once V. K., a state prosecutor in Moscow, showed me his Party membership card. On it there was recorded a severe reprimand signed by one of the five secretaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

"I deserved it, little brother, I deserved it," V. K. assured me. "Carelessness. Negligence. . . . Taking the path of least resistance. . . . Lack of Bolshevik vigilance and self-criticism. . . . The whole thing was like a nightmare. I, a Communist of seventeen years' standing, an Old Bolshevik one might say, called before the Central Committee of our Party, questioned, confronted with irrefutable evidence, accused of bureaucracy, given the severest moral drubbing a man could stand, and sent back to work with the disgrace of a severe reprimand entered on my Party card. A reprimand is no laughing matter, my dear fellow. A couple of such reprimands and you fly out of the Party, disgraced for life. To a Bolshevik, a reprimand of this kind is, next to actual expulsion, the worst possible punishment. . . ."

V. K. would have continued in this vein indefinitely were it not for my insistence on knowing the specific cause of the reprimand. He chose to be a little vague. But from the disconnected account I gathered that he had been inconsiderate in the treatment of a youn· peasant girl, a daughter of a collective farm· who had come to Moscow and, forced by ci cumstances and bad influences, gone into th streets. Instead of studying her case carefully, her background, the cause of her coming to the city, the cause of her fall, and the best way of reclaiming her, V. K., much overworked, settled the case in the easiest way for himself: bureaucratically. He simply sent the girl, by administrative order, to a labor camp.

When the news of the girl's treatment reached the *kolkhoz,* there was an outcry of indignation. At a meeting the collective farmers drew up a letter to the Central Committee of the Party criticizing in no uncertain language the manner in which the Prosecutor had disposed of the case. Before he had undertaken anything, the letter maintained, the Prosecutor should have got in touch with the Collective to which the girl belonged. Without noise and publicity, in the normal environment of the home and the

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Collective, she would have been put back on the path to a normal, healthy life. Such a procedure would have been more humane and more beneficial to everybody concerned, the state, the girl, her family and her Collective.

The Party acted immediately. Representatives of the collective farm were invited to Moscow to appear before the Central Committee. V. K. was questioned and reprimanded in their presence. The girl was released from the labor camp and sent back to her village.

I asked V. K. how he had taken the ordeal.

"It was terrible," he confessed. "I suffered for months. I couldn't sleep. I couldn't eat. I made my wife and children sick with worry. But believe me, such pain is good for one. It makes one look into himself, reexamine himself, watch that he doesn't degenerate on his job, that he doesn't become a bureaucrat. It makes one a better man and a better Bolshevik. . . . Yes, Comrade, I am all for an occasional bang over the head, even if it is my own head. . . ."

OWING to the constant campaign against bureaucracy in the press, and the energetic propaganda conducted by the Party, Soviet citizens have developed a veritable phobia for bureaucracy. The most insulting word in the Soviet vocabulary is "bureaucrat." The word has magic potency. It makes officials turn pale and it gets things done. Thus whenever I balk up against unfulfilled official promises, procrastination, red tape, bland refusals of reasonable requests, I narrow my eyes into a knifelike slit, grit my teeth so as to make the muscles around my jaws dance with fury, and in a suppressed, scarcely audible voice (yet loud enough to reach the culprit), I hiss: "B-u-r-e-a-u-c-r-a-c-y . . . d-i-s-g-u-s-t-i-n-g. . . ." The addressee pretends not to hear. But things do get a move on.

AS CONDITIONS here are improving, as millions of people are acquiring experience and skill, as industry and commerce are more efficiently organized, especially as the Stakhanov movement is becoming more widespread, I have less and less occasion to resort to my little act of narrowing my eyes, gritting my teeth, and hissing the terrible insult. Several years ago, I used to perform quite regularly. It had almost become a second habit. So much so, indeed, that in 1931, when I arrived in New York and a fat, rude, loud-mouthed brute of a customs official irritated me by the way he scattered my innocent belongings all over the place and almost frightened my innocent wife out of her wits, I just naturally lapsed into my Soviet habit and called him a bureaucrat.

"What-che-say?" snapped the nonplussed official, letting the corner of his mouth drop viciously to the edge of his chin.

"Bureaucrat," I repeated obligingly.

"And what's that?" He pricked up his ears, sensing that I was saying something not particularly complimentary.

"I should advise you to look it up in the dictionary," I retorted.

"This is not the Soviet Union," my wife whispered, pulling at my sleeve in an effort to prevent trouble.

I had to admit it wasn't, for this fellow became even nastier.

CHANGING one's habitat from the socialist world to the capitalist world and the reverse involves strange psychological adjustments. Thus, an American revolutionary artist, a cartoonist, living in Moscow, complains that he finds it almost impossible to practise his art here. In America he was sharply opposed to the established capitalist order. In the Soviet Union he is fervently for the established socialist order. The change from a "nay" to a "yea" attitude to one's milieu may be relatively easy in life, it seems to be devilishly difficult in art.

No, the change in one's attitude towards the surrounding world is not so very easy in life either. While marching in the November 7 parade with my Russian comrades, I found it very difficult to adjust my emotional responses to the militiamen. In my mind a cop is associated with beating up paraders, breaking up picket lines, with arrests, pri
He is a symbol of the violence and cr
of the master class. And it is difficult fo
to feel, and I have constantly to remind m
of it, that the Soviet cops represent my
protect my class; that they are friends,
rades. When I realize it, I have the ur
run over and hug them.

Once I saw Peter Malyshkin, a Stakh
vite, a Communist, hand a coin to an
beggar. I was shocked. Even in Ame
where the beggar has a justifiable econ
and moral claim, the Communists are
posed to giving alms. But in the Soviet Ur
beggars (there are a few of them still l
are almost exclusively members of inim
classes—former exploiters, czarist police
cers, intransigent kulaks—or degenerates
lazy to work. For a Communist to give al
in the Soviet Union struck me as the hei
of unprincipled conduct. I said so.

Malyshkin answered: "Several years ag
should have told this beggar to go hang h
self or jump into the river. Those w
pretty hard, cruel days. But it's diffe
now; times are changed. The enemy
smashed. There are only a few left. T
are impotent. They can do no real ha
If we could afford it, these people, I am s
would get state support. So far, howe
that's out of the question. While many
est workers and peasants still have to
themselves simple comforts, while there
still not enough schools and nurseries and
pitals to accommodate everyone, the S
state can scarcely afford to be solicitous
its enemies. Now mind—it's not a mat
vindictiveness; it's a matter of the v
withal. We have not yet the necessary
fluity of social wealth. The State, i
to remain true to itself as an expression
the laboring masses, must show preferences
in the distribution of the as yet limited social
benefits. Otherwise those who have been and
are socially useful, especially those who fought
for the Revolution, whose fathers, and so
and brothers, and sisters died in the strug
against this very class, would raise an aw
rumpus—justly.

"But I am not the state. What the
may not indulge in, I, as an individual,
It happens that I do have some superfl
coins in my pocket. I feel uncomfor
when I see another living creature suffer.
is feeble. He is old. He won't live
longer. I can't hate him now. I even
a slight feeling of pity. The governme
not yet in a position to take care of
Well, what the devil—I gave him a coi
what?"

Suddenly, Malyshkin's casual little a
kindness assumed for me a deep symb
meaning: I saw in it the great solidity
power of the victorious proletariat, the
gence of Socialist humanism, the psychol
impulse behind the new Soviet constit
and the dawn of a genuinely democ
genuinely free and happy classless Comm
society.

Limbach

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The Volcano

As when some old volcano will begin
To shake off slumber it was buried in,
And like a lusty Titan hiccough thunder,
Till earth for miles around is rent asunder;
While lavas rear, a monstrous avalanche,
To gulp up every farmhouse, fence, and branch;
As when Vesuvius hurls up many a crag
Amid such billowing vapor, cinders, slag,
Until you wonder if infernal regions
Were disembowelled with their flaming legions—

So now there is a land wherein a vast
Volcano spews up high an ancient past—
Coughs up a steaming Styx—does not abate
Disgorging, from a hundred fissures, hate. . . .
(What deep and inner contradictions sent
Destruction gushing forth from every vent?)
From what abyss, what subterranean deep,
Do these barbaric epochs, thought asleep,
Erupt and burst with poisonous hissing? . . . Gall
Of malice, pitchy flames of terror fall,
Mixed with the fragments of the Middle Ages,
Scattered afar as the volcano rages!

The fumes grow thick and acrid. None can see
For all the lurid smoke of bigotry.
With all the tumult of the shrieking, which
Swells from the tortured under burning pitch,
Under the pumice and the sulphur's dread,
You'd think that Phelethon were vomited
From Hades over houses, garden-nooks,
And over temples, libraries with books,
Over the ambushed masses, over all!—
So thus, within this Nazi Etna's pall,
How many a city, as the lavas creep,
Chokes like another Pompeii, covered deep;
How many a sparkling city must become
Another buried Herculaneum!

LOUIS GINSBERG.

Interview

In his museum village I found smiling
The great industrialist, soft-palmed, soft-voiced:

"No man should work for profit only"

Into the past he looks—
The standardizer, modern mass producer—
Admires the craftsman
Carving with slow care
Shaping with loving pride, fine hands
The single object, part by part, the whole.

Eight smoke stacks bar the sun,
Smudge the flat basin of the River Rouge.
Bones bent equally under the loud drums
Of overhead conveyors, hands stained alike;
The sweat of armpits to the sweating steel,
Eyes, nostrils thick
With the same grease-heavy air. . . .

"In money for its own sake
I have no interest"

From a year's labor of these numbered workers
(Bread at the day's end, soggy sleep)
Profit enough to buy imagination:
One free man's dream, one life
Memoried in oak: carved chest, museum-piece.

On the assembly line
Hard shoulders, stout wrists, quick hands:
Steve Projak, turning
Bolt after bolt on black connecting rods
One way one hundred times
An hour eight hours a day
Six days a week months years
(Wife and five kids in Three Oaks
A raise on the speed-up
Partner laid off in June)
Almost enough to eat, to sleep,
Bolts for connecting rods: steel charity.

"The only
Charity I know is paying people
Fairly for what they do"

Steve Projak, your ancestor
Might take such oak as grew
Once by this oily river:
Shape with mind and heart
Leaves under sun and moonlight, forest shadow,
The rose garland, or the rich-lobed
And rounded flesh of fruit.
You earn your bread, Steve Projak,
Fairly for what you do.

"It is only by the exchange
Of benefits that profit can exist"

We talked of the Plant's efficiency, shook hands.
His sentiment sure antiseptic to
Conscience decayed, his lean face phosphorescent
In the green light of evening, I left smiling
The soft-voiced visionary, great industrialist.

RUTH LECHLITNER.

Aerograd

O spontaneous cheer! To hell with
well-made drama!
Birth is a bursting! The world
is very young and tender, surprising as
snow in summer, clear as a skyful of little clouds,
clean as leaves in the taiga.
Man was born yesterday, wise
with laughter, wise
and winged, a puppy tumbling
to triumph, a swallow soaring
for joy.
Adventure lives purged and fair.
Miracles are
an unborn city, true dreams, boys plunging
drifting like summer snow, white
birds, plum blossoms
to blanket the earth with beauty.
Hatred? envy? enmity? a sickness:
disgust of Circe's courtiers finding no wallow—
despair of Diogenes jostling honest men in droves.
O men and women growing!
O socialist pioneers responsible,
eager to build, thirsty with love!
O love-thirst—to give, to give!
O mature responsible lovers laughing,
ten thousand times alive,
living to build, to dignify,
to cherish!

PHILIP STEVENSON.

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Theirs Is the Kingdom

CHARLES BRADFORD

IT HAD been hot that spring. Right after March it got hot and it stayed hot through May and when June came it grew hotter settling into summer. Even at night it was hot and the heat didn't help me sleep any. I kept worrying every night, I kept thinking, how does a man get located? How does a man do when he is ready to find a job? I was scared about making a living. I didn't know if I could or not. All that was bad and the heat was bad. I was scared about being able to make a living all spring.

I sat on the bed.

Mom came in and said, "My goodness, boy, what are you doing? You know it's almost seven o'clock?"

"I can't go," I said.

She had a towel, a dish towel, she kept wiping her hands. She wasn't thinking about what she was doing. She wiped her hands over and over again. She said, "Well now, John—what are you talking about? Of course you're going."

"No," I said.

"Why, John boy—what's got into you?"

It was my left shoe. I had it on. I held it up on my foot for her to see. The sole was all right. It was the upper. One side had come unsewed near the front. You could see my toes and it looked like hell too, all flapped out at the side that way.

"Oh, John boy," said my Mom, "Oh, John boy."

"Look at it," I said. "Do you think I want to go and sit in front of all those people with a shoe like that?"

She had her under lip tucked in. I felt mean.

I said, "What do you expect me to do anyway?"

She just said, "Let me have it, John."

I kicked it off and laid back on the bed. Right in front of all those people. I was glad about the shoe.

She picked up the shoe and went out of the room.

I thought, to hell with it all. But I was really scared about it. I was afraid about being able to make a living. I had been afraid of that all spring.

In a minute she came back in. She said, "John, look. I fixed it. Look at it now."

I looked. She had put some adhesive tape over the whole toe to hold the unsewed place. She had blackened the tape and it did look pretty good.

She said, "You can wear it, John, can't you?"

She looked at me. She was afraid that I wouldn't go. She wanted me to go. She wanted me to go bad.

Then I didn't feel so mean. I felt good toward her. I said, "Okay, Mom—let's have it."

When I went out of the house at seven-thirty, walking light because of the shoe, she was crying.

She kissed me on the face. She kissed me about four times.

I said, "Aw—." I felt bad and choked up. I couldn't talk any more, so I went right out of the house and down the street in the warm night, past the railroad station and across the tracks that lead out of town and down the main street and past the pool hall and on through the residential district and across the field in front of the high school. There was the school all lit up and a lot of cars parked all around and many people walking up the steps to go inside. Inside the main entrance flowers were stacked up, stacked high, and the principal stood there by the flowers with a shiny eye, like Mom's, shaking everybody's hand and talking without knowing what he said.

When I heard him saying, "Ah, how *do* you do? Ah, yes; ah, yes. Mrs. Jones, ah, how do you do—" I just thought, aw hell, aw hell!

We sat there under the lights and he talked.

Everybody in the audience sat quiet. We sat quiet.

He talked. He was the county tax collector from Riverside. He waved his arms, first at us, then at the audience, then at the ceiling. I saw the sweat on his forehead. I saw his red neck.

He said, "I am proud—proud—my throat is full, my heart is full. It is the beauty, the clear-eyed beauty of these young men and young women here. I am proud that it is I—I who dedicate to them, the world. And this eager world awaits them, and this eager world needs them. To them the arms of this world are open. Theirs is the kingdom, theirs is the glory, theirs is the golden path of youth. Theirs—"

Kelly

Some of the women started to sniffle.

I kept forgetting about my shoe. Every time I'd forget, I put my left foot out in front of me to be comfortable and when I did that, the audience could see the tape around the bottom of my shoe. I kept forgetting all the time.

There was a hell of a jam after it was all over. The main entrance was crammed with students and people. I was trying to get out—I wanted to get out quick. It was all over and I wanted to get out into the world quick, like when a man swims in a cold lake—I was tired of being afraid. I wanted to jump in it—splash!

George's Place was full. There were students there who had cars and could get downtown quick. Some girls were there. The boys had a bottle—they were talking loud.

When I came in, one said, "If here ain't John. Hy John, old boy old boy old boy old boy. Listen boys, John here is going out into the world to conquer. I bet he comes back to this little old town a rich man. Ain't you, John?"

They were drunk. The only thing was to humor them. "Sure," I said.

"He's good—he admits it," said another.

"Sure," I said, "I admit it."

"Oh, my sweet Jesus, he *does* admit it."

George came up and said, "What for you boy?"

"Coffee," I said.

One of them said, "You drinking coffee? Bagh!"

I didn't say anything.

He said, "Here pass this to John old boy old boy old boy. Hurray—we're graduated by God by God!"

The bottle was damp from their sweaty hands. I tipped it up and the liquor was green and hot.

Somebody said, "Lookit him, *lookit him!*"

"Hey," said the one that owned the bottle, "Hey!"

I passed the bottle back. They all drank, wiping off the neck with the heel of their palms, holding it up, high, letting the liquor pour into them, shuddering. The school's best pole vaulter drank the most.

The place was full of smoke and frying-meat smell and full of crazy screaming, laughing and talking, all of it coming through the liquor. George was busy with them, fixing sandwiches—they kept yelling at him for faster service and more to eat.

One of them said, "What you drinking tonight, John?"

"Coffee," I said. I smiled.

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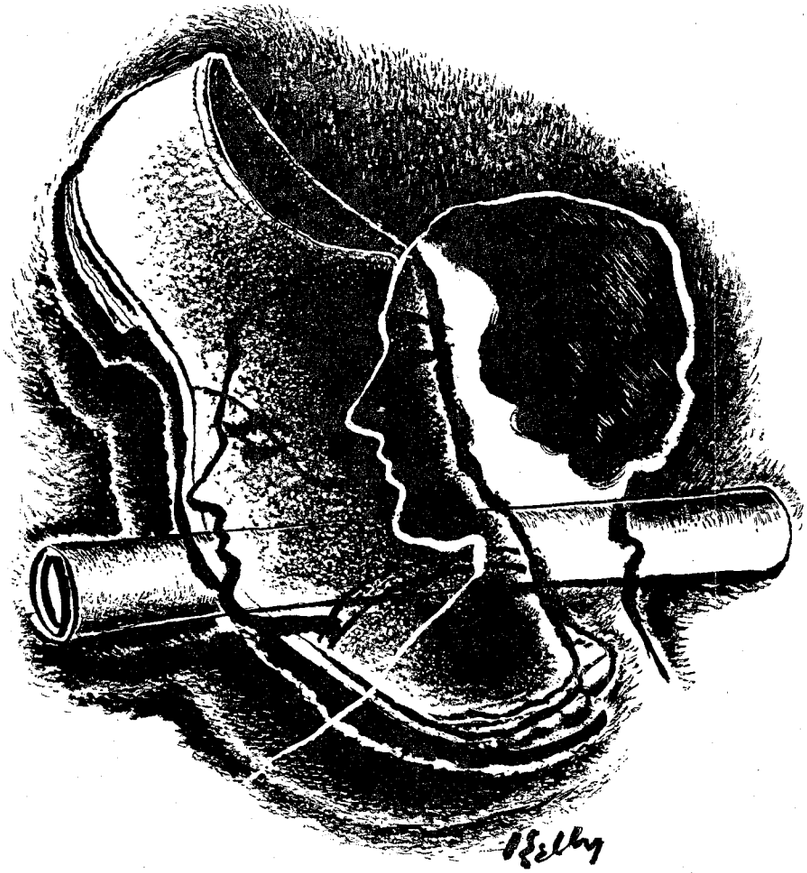

Kelly

"Say," said another one. "Leave him alone. His ma works in the laundry. Ain't you got no tack?"

"Tack?" Said the drunkest one, "Tack? What's tack? You're tack. You're head's a tack. Haw ha ha ha haw!"

Another said, "Oh, you drunkard, you damn drunkard."

"I ain't drunk!

"You are!"

"I ain't."

"You are!"

"I ain't. You are, he, she, or it, is."

"Nuts!"

"T'hell. T'hell!"

"Graduated—just think, *graduated*. Haw ha ha haw. Oh no more reading no more books no more teacher's dirty looks—no more reading no more books no more teacher's dirty looks. Aaah—ha ha ha ah."

"God, you guys are drunk, drunkards, drunkards!"

"That's all right—Edgar Allan Poe was a drunkard. That's all right."

"So was Columbus."

"So was George Washington."

"So was the Pope. God, I hate the Pope!"

"You and I, both."

"Say, those priests and those nuns. I don't know."

"What you say?" said George. He came and stood at the counter in front of them.

"Aw go-wan, George—we didn't know you was peeking."

"Ah, George—ah, George."

The girls weren't saying much. They were afraid of the drunken company. It was a small town. They had to be careful in a small town like that.

"Give John another drink."

"Ohokay—here yu'are Johnnie old boy old boy old boy."

They passed me the bottle again. One said, "Just a drink this time."

Another said, "Pass *your* bottle around, Johnnie boy."

I tipped it up. There was the hot good liquor in my throat. It went down easy now and most of the fear was gone, only brave now, not caring, not giving any kind of a damn."

"Give it back Johnnie oh Johnnie oh!"

One of the girls said, "We gotta go you kids."

"We gotta go you kids," said one of the boys. "When we gotta go we gotta go."

The boys laughed, screaming laughter. The girls were silent. One of the boys laughed so hard, he doubled up on his stool and the hamburger spurted out between his teeth.

"Oh Johnnie oh Johnnie oh!"

"John has more sense than any of you," said one of the girls—one called Dixie.

"Oh Johnnie oh!"

I smiled at her through the hot liquor.

One of the boys said, "John's got a girrul. Oh Johnnie oh!"

"Why'ant you kiss her John. "Why'ant-chu?"

I got up, walking through the liquor around to the girl. Through the liquor I saw a scared look come into her eyes.

"Kiss her John old boy!"

I put my arm around the back of her neck.

It cracked right out, *smack*. I didn't feel it.

She said, "You—oh you're drunk."

"No," I said.

She said, "Get away from me!"

"Hey," said one of the boys, "what's *he* trying to do anyway? Is *he* trying to *make* Dixie? *Why* Goddam him!"

Then he grabbed me by the shoulder. It was the pole vaulter, drunk, bad drunk.

"Keep your hands off," I said.

He put his hand out and I shoved him. I was afraid of him, but I shoved and he went down between the stools and lay there drunk, with his mouth open.

One with a white face came through them toward me. He said, "You—you cheap John. Drink all our booze, then try to insult one of our girls—you cheap. Why don't you go wash clothes!"

I didn't say anything.

One said, "Come on men, let's go."

They went. The pole vaulter got up and went too. When they were gone it was quiet, too quiet. The noise of the quiet seemed to be in my ears.

"Now—you see?" said George.

"It's like being a Jew," I said.

"Yeah—sure," said George. He mopped the counter with a rag.

"Well," I said, "Good night, George."

"Good night," he said. He was still mopping the counter when I went out.

I walked home through the warm evening. I walked down the main street. A string of cars went by me. A girl laughed.

They had graduated too.

I walked down the main street, past the depot and over the tracks and on toward our house. It was all dark in front and I went quiet to the back and let myself in.

Mom was waiting up for me.

"Hello," I said.

"I've been waiting up, John."

"Is it late?" I said.

"No. Was it all right, John?" I saw her looking at my shoe. It still held.

"Oh," I said, "sure—it was fine."

"I thought when you didn't come, that maybe you had gone out with the boys. Did you have a good time?"

It came to me then, grinding in my guts. I said, sudden, yelling at her, "No—NO!"

I didn't say any more, yelling like that.

"Have you had something to drink, John?"

"Yes," I said, quietly.

Then she said, about to cry, "I'm sorry, John."

"No," I said, "it's all right."

She said nothing.

I went to bed and the liquor had gone that quick. I was graduated all right. Sure I was. I couldn't go to sleep. All spring I had worried about how a man got started. I didn't know. It seemed pretty hard. It kept me awake a long time. There was just no way around it. A man had to get started, but it did seem hard.

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Our Readers' Forum

Tagging Along with Kent

As one outcast American to another, let me tell you how much I enjoyed Rockwell Kent's "What Is an American?" Like Kent, I am in the position of a boycotted black sheep—the neighbors glare at me and make far from subtle remarks about my "an-archistic-communee-istic-bolshevistic opinions"— the postman throws the mail on the porch instead of in the mailbox where it belongs and members of the Black Legion (alias the Klan) hurl epithets at me (behind my back and for the benefit of my Jeffersonian friends).

For myself, a more or less isolated American youth, to read the words of Comrade Kent, a fine artist, a capable craftsman, a courageous American, a worker in every sense of the word—to hear author, and artist, and explorer say:

"To be a true American a man must have the will to right our social wrongs. *How*, is his own concern. For me, the way is Communism."

. . . Is to give one strength to face the problems and the struggle ahead.

In the South, as in the rest of America, our leaders have betrayed us. They make feudal slaves of us, they work us in their offices and factories, for barely enough to keep us alive. They tell us (the youth) to join the Young Republicans and the Young Democrats, and a thorough investigation of these two organizations convinces us that their only claim to posterity is their ability to dance and drink. Where then, can the youth of America turn? If we turn towards those who earnestly desire to improve conditions, we turn as Rockwell Kent turns . . . LEFT, and since I am unable to accept the muddled-up theories of Allen Tate & Company, that motley group of pro-fascist agrarians and urban intellectuals, I intend to tag along with Rockwell Kent, Earl Browder, Granville Hicks, Mike Gold, and other Americans. SOUTHERN WRITER.

Here's Another

We feel that the Rockwell Kent article in the last issue of THE NEW MASSES, entitled "What Is an American?" is so important and appealing that a reprint should be put into the hands of every single school teacher in America.

To effect this by time school reopens we suggest raising a fund for that purpose, and enclose herewith a dollar to start same.

Concord, Mass. THE COOPERATIVE.

In Defense of Mayer's Engels

Isidor Schneider's comments on Gustav Mayer's biography of Engels do not maintain the political standard of the rest of the magazine.

Although he refers to Mayer's treatment of Engels' youth as a subject he had covered in a much larger work as yet untranslated," he does not seem to understand that the "much larger work" covers the entire life of Engels. The first volume, covering 1820-1851, was first published by Julius Springer in Berlin, 1920. This was revised when the second volume was issued some two years ago by Martinus Mijhoff in the Hague. It had been originally announced by the Berlin house of Ullstein, but the coming of the Nazis prevented its publication.

Together the two volumes include 978 pages of text, notes and indexes. It is obvious that the English version is only an abridgement, and the function of the reviewer, among other things, should have been to judge how faithfully the English editor performed his task. I think no one familiar with the original work can accuse the author of neglecting to treat the development of Engels' ideas, and it would have been of value had the review pointed out the principles on which the editor pruned the original work. Apparently he worked on the principle that the English reading public is unable to handle ideas and insists on "human interest" in a biography. I notice that two entire chapters seem to have vanished in the English version, the one called "Philosophy," the other "Interpretation of history."

It is incorrect to say that "Mayer is a Social-Democrat"; Mayer has never belonged to any party. *Obviously he is no Communist* (despite the N. Y. Times reviewer), but one had better not employ tickets too freely. I might quote the following sentence, which follows his description of the official Social-Democratic falsification of the preface to the 1896 edition of Class Struggles in France: "The interpretation that Engels at the end of his life wanted to advise European Social-Democracy away from every use of violence belongs in the realm of legend," etc., etc.

Furthermore, Bernstein, under Engels' guidance, followed a correct revolutionary line, and only blossomed into the reformist after Engels' death. I might quote an early letter of Engels to Bebel, dated 25 August 1881: "Bernstein has made good past expectation [his articles on the 'Intellectuals,' for example, apart from trifles, were quite excellent and kept wholly to the correct line], so that we could hardly find a better man."

And the final "incredible valedictory paragraph" makes a good deal more sense in the original than in the mistranslation of the English version.

It seems to me quite correct to score the biography for its failure to relate Engels' life to the present, since even the original pussyfoots in this direction, but it would have been a great deal more to the point to recognize the biography as the work of a non-Communist, and to have directed the attention of readers to the brilliant speech of Manuilsky, or, for those who read German, to the translation of Soviet Encyclopedia articles published by the Ring Verlag, Zürich, 1933, under the title: "Friedrich Engels: Der Denker und Revolutionär."

HARRY MARKS.

For a Left-Wing Digest

More power to the idea of a left-wing People's Digest. [See THE NEW MASSES, June 23. "Our Readers' Forum."]

Priced moderately it would reach a broad group, and would act as a stimulus to seek further knowledge on social and political ideas. It would also act as an introductor to progressive and radical publications.

It is a field that has been neglected. And I for one would like to see THE NEW MASSES take the lead in advancing this purpose.

PIERRE REY.

An Interesting Question

The impending labor sports carnival on Randall's Island this summer and the Workers' Olympiad scheduled to take place in Spain in the near future make me wonder whether the time isn't ripe to raise a question that has been lurking in the back of my head for a long time.

The question is: why doesn't the labor movement encourage the development of rifle shooting as a workers' sport (it is already so regarded by the American farmer, when and if he can find the money for cartridges, which isn't often, as a rule) instead of merely reviling the militaristic phases of it as expressed in the R.O.T.C. or in the Hearst Trophy award?

Tribute was paid to the development of civilian marksmanship in the Soviet Union in an article that appeared some months ago in the American Rifleman, the official organ of the National Rifle Association, the quasi-public body which works closely with the War Department in the development of civilian marksmanship in this country. The author of the article, an American technician working in the U.S.S.R., had long been a rifleman for the fun of it, and looked into the situation in the Red republics. His account was a glowing one, and, incidentally, amusingly naïve when he pointed out that the Soviet rifle-team organization was based upon the group of workers in a given factory or mill. He thought that was a much better way than our hit-or-miss geographical system, and asked why we didn't base our civilian marksmanship on the much more handy and logical units of the workers in a given factory!

But to come back to my main point: there is a Director of Civilian Marksmanship set up under the War Department whose job it is to distribute arms and ammunition free or at reduced prices to individuals, clubs, or teams which are affiliated with the National Rifle Association. (There is, incidentally, a queerish arrangement in this hand-in-glove operation of what is, strictly speaking, a private association, with an official government agency. One way it works is that the private agency must o. k. a civilian marksman before he may buy the Service rifle the D.C.M. distributes to the citizenry.) This is the way the Black Legion thugs got free ammunition from the War Department. Why shouldn't workers' rifle clubs get some of it?

Moreover, there are now on the market cheaply made but excellently performing smallbore target rifles which bring the sport a little nearer to the worker's pocketbook. They can be had for around $10.

What about it? Can't we have a little target competition this summer on Randall's Island? It's a sport that can be a lot of fun.

BULL'S-EYE.

RESORTS

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Other Resorts on Page 31

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Of Love and Other Things

IT WAS a Chinese friend who made me realize that "propaganda" might be discovered almost anywhere in literature. He had been reading one of the standard anthologies of English poetry, with an attention to meanings and ideas such as readers native to the language rarely give. He said: "Western people are not convinced that what happens between a man and woman is good?"

"Oh, no," I said, "we appreciate it as much as any race, maybe more."

"The poetry," he said, tapping the anthology, "makes me think you are not convinced. As Shakespeare says, 'it doth protest too much!' "

That the concern with love in Western poetry might seem unbalanced to anybody had never occurred to me. I realized, suddenly, how "impure" to my Chinese friend would seem George Moore's *Anthology of Pure Poetry* which had just been published at the time. Moore argued that ideas were the corruptible elements in poetry. They went out of date leaving a useless sediment in such poetry which has survived in spite of them. In Moore's anthology most of the work of the major poets, including Shakespeare and Milton, was barred out. The verses were chiefly celebrations of the joys of life. To my Chinese friend it would have sounded like a pamphlet on lovemaking.

Trying to puzzle out a reason for the emphasis on love in our poetry the only conclusion I could come to was that it had been a form of counter-propaganda to the propaganda against sexual love contained in Christianity. It has endured as a tradition just as the Christian agitation against sexual love continues as a latent force, reviving over issues like birth control and divorce.

This is only one instance of the propagandas latent in literature. By its very nature, as an art based on language, literature cannot escape George Moore's "element of corruption"—ideas. The important thing about a word is its meaning; rhythms and other sound values are concomitants; the inferior position in world literature of virtuosos like Swinburne and Gongora; the sense of disgust and despair that followed those final developments of the "cult of unintelligibility," the gibberish of "dadaism," indicate that literature based on other elements than meaning is felt to be abnormal. Today we recognize that the "cult of unintelligibility" was a reaction to a life which had ceased to have meaning or dignity; and it is significant that, today, the Old Guard of the cult have become mystics, that they now claim supermeanings for their mumbo-jumbo, the vocabulary of which is made up of amputated words linked together, for which they now claim the power of sorcerer's spells.

If we agree that the important thing about a word is its meaning and go from that to an examination of those meanings we find ourselves on shifting ground. A meaning will vary according to our subjective use of it. A revolutionist speaking of the U.S.S.R. as a *rich* country will put a different shade of meaning in the word than when he speaks of the U.S.A. as a *rich* country. In the two uses of that one word, there will be qualitative judgments. Still more interesting is the fact that language has evolved what might be called a dual vocabulary in which a concept may be expressed in two connotations, one favorable, the other unfavorable. For example, we give a good opinion when we say *determination* about a quality we disapprove of when we say *obstinacy*. Two histories of England, one by a Catholic, the other by a Protestant, examined together, would strikingly show how identical words can carry different tones of meaning and how this dual vocabulary is used in describing the same events. This dualism is so developed as to make language serve as an instrument of controversy. Again, prestige words are levied upon for alien and frequently antithetical uses. An excellent example, pointed out by Kenneth Burke, is the use of the word *science* and its derivations. Science has won such standing that it is almost universally used as a term of approbation. As a consequence we find a form of faith-healing taking the name of Christian *Science* and spiritualism defining itself as mental *science*. In the very discussion of art and propaganda we fall into this dilemma, that the two words are weighted with subjective judgment—art as the good desired, propaganda as a danger.

These remarks are not offered as original observations. Other writers, Kenneth Burke especially, have pointed out this iridescence of language and have proposed a more conscious use of it both for the purposes of art and of propaganda. I give it this emphasis because it is so often lost sight of in discussions around propaganda and literature.

I remember how in the old days the arts used to be graded according to their "purity," music coming first, the plastic arts following, and literature, as the most exposed to the infections of meaning, last. Today numbers of composers and painters and sculptors who once were emphatic about the superiority of their arts to literature, speak enviously of literature as a medium in which artists can most effectively express themselves. So standards change as history alters values and emphases.

I know of no writing which, upon analysis, will not yield some propaganda. George Moore's *Anthology of Pure Poetry* is eloquent on the pleasures of rural living and loving. Eliot's *Wasteland* makes a horror scene of the sterility of contemporary life. There can be little doubt that the unsatisfactory position of the artist in late capitalist society drove him to the left; and the signs of it could be seen in the literature of the preceding decade, the fiction of which was largely a bitter propaganda for the rights of the artist, whether negatively in the satire of Sinclair Lewis, or positively in the great stream of novels defending the sensitive artist against society. I think it is not far-fetched to say that the acceptance of Greenwich Village standards of militant individuality, and the establishment of foundations providing fellowships for scholars and artists were responses to this propaganda.

During the most esthetic period in recent literary history that I can remember, a critic could drive a writer to despair by asking, "Why did you write it?" That there must be purpose, even if the purpose cannot be articulated except in mystical terms, was assumed to be conclusive. The most successful answer to such a question was, "I had to write it." Such an answer could and was used to justify automatic writing. Nevertheless, the extent to which a writer could be said to have been possessed by his subject was a standard of judgment. Instinctively we feel that a writer should be possessed by his material which he masters in the act of literary creation. And because he is so mastered by it, it becomes inevitably a sort of propaganda.

What we specifically object to as propaganda, what makes us give it a weight of disfavor when we use the word, is when the writer uses material he is not actually possessed with, a body of doctrines extrinsic to his experience. Then dogma rather than his consciousness exerts the controls. Then the living quality of vision that should be born out of his own experience is lost as he tries to draw it from print and paper, from a system of ideas not truly his own. The fear of such an outcome is what has motivated the distrust of "propaganda."

The fear was justified. Much of our writing, particularly in poetry, was a transcript not of life but of dogma and functioned as inferior propaganda. But the condemnation was extended in hostile quarters to the good along with the bad. That an inept artistic use of revolutionary doctrine had been made was held to justify them in condemning its use altogether. It was forgotten that this body of doctrine had become more than mere texts. It was forgotten also that outright propaganda, like the *Communist Manifesto*, could, because it was the work of able writers possessed by

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their subject, be generally admitted to be literary masterpieces.

To make clear what I mean I will make use of a historical analogy, suggested by Stanley Burnshaw. The Renaissance reintroduced classical literature into Europe. The body of this literature was at first scarcely more abundant and varied than Marxist literature today. The ideas embodied in it and especially valued, acted for Europe as both a revolutionary and artistic impulse. One of its essential ideas was the values of the secular as opposed to the religious life. It became a lever in the overthrow of feudalism.

This body of literature and its ideas enormously stimulated literature, reaching its apogee in Elizabethan England. I do not intend to suggest that there will be any precisely parallel development, following the introduction of Marxist literature. I use it to indicate how a new body of literature and ideas has served before as a cultural stimulant. There is not likely to be the same full effect in literature both because Marxist classics do not serve in the same way as literary models, and because Marxist literature comes upon the scene where a powerful literature already exists with which it has to merge, whereas during the Renaissance the classical literature moved into a virtually unoccupied field, the chief writing being devotional literature.

What the Marxist classics bring, like the Latin classics in the Renaissance, is a new realm of consciousness, a new field of experience; for social and mental changes always accompany the introduction of revolutionary ideas. The world is made different by them. They make their own additions to tradition, establish their special continuity with it. From this point of view we can realize and willingly admit that a writer may be as completely possessed by consciousness of the class struggle as he had been previously by the struggle of the sensitive individual in a Philistine society, by the hope of a new world as he had been previously by the futility of the old world. He will be a propagandist, but in the sense that all vital writers have been propagandists.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Life, Liberalism and Revolution

ABINGER HARVEST, by E. M. Forster. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

LAST YEAR, speaking at the International Congress of Writers in Paris, E. M. Forster said: "As for my politics, you will have guessed that I am not a fascist—fascism does evil that evil may come. And you may have guessed that I am not a Communist, though perhaps I might be one if I was a younger and a braver man, for in Communism I can see hope. It does many things which I think evil, but I know that it intends good."

In this typically cautious and yet candid way Mr. Forster was expressing a conviction that had long been growing in him. As early as 1920, in an essay on the British character, he wrote: "The supremacy of the middle classes is probably ending. What new elements the working class will introduce one cannot say." In 1925, in a fine, indignant attack on middle-class snobbishness, he spoke of "the instrument of a new dawn." And in 1934 he wrote, "No political creed except Communism offers an intelligent man any hope."

In his 1934 essay Forster went on, just as he did in his 1935 speech, to say that he was too old for Communism, but his reservations interest us less than his affirmations. Who can imagine any of his literary contemporaries going so far? Not Lytton Strachey, for example, or Clive Bell, his friends at Cambridge. Shudder as they might at middle-class vulgarity, they never stopped to ask themselves if there was hope in the working class. Not Virginia Woolf, whose novels Forster's more than a little resemble. In the pursuit of Life with a capital L, she has fluttered farther and farther from life as the majority of Englishmen know how to spell it. Not D. H. Lawrence, another writer to whom Forster is akin. Though, unlike Forster, Lawrence was born in the working class, he turned his back on it, and found death instead of the Life he so rhapsodically sought.

Yet Forster, in his early novels, was no more directly concerned with social problems than Lawrence or Mrs. Woolf. They and he alike belonged to the group that broke away sharply from the tradition of Wells, Shaw, Galsworthy, and Bennett. None of the situations he portrayed pointed to the need for parliamentary reform. Each of the four novels published between 1905 and 1910 deals with the problem of the survival of vitality in an individual situated in a hostile environment. The central character is usually a person of the middle class, a person sensitive enough to feel that the conventions of that class are murderous and yet too timid or too gentle to break away from them. For this person vitality is represented by a member of a different class—not, I hasten to say, a class-conscious worker, but rather some apparently good-for-nothing vagabond, carefree, irresponsible, but alive—Gino in *Where Angels Fear to Tread,* Stephen in *The Longest Journey,* George Emerson (who does not quite fit the pattern) in *A Room With a View,* and Leonard Best in *Howard's End.* It is the conflict between convention and vitality that provides the drama in each novel, and both convention and vitality are shown, for the most part, as if they had little to do with social conditions.

This seems a far cry from Communism until we remember that the Communist Party is, in Lincoln Steffens' phrase, the party of the poets. The contradictions of capitalism, one may say, are such that the full expression of human potentialities demands the creation of a new economic order. If a man values highly enough the possibilities of human life, and if he sees clearly enough what is required for their realization, he is forced to be a revolutionary. It is the second "if" that makes the trouble: most literary men value life, but few of them understand it. D. H. Lawrence took a small segment of experience, called it Life, and forgot everything else. Mr. Forster might have made the same mistake, but he didn't.

A Passage to India, the only novel Forster has written since *Howard's End* appeared in 1910, shows he is a serious liberal. That is, he really does try to see all sides of a problem. It is not necessary to ignore the weaknesses of liberalism to see that liberalism and the passion for life make a valuable combination. Liberalism alone results in a paralysis of action, and often, indeed, is little more than an excuse for inactivity. A sensitive awareness of human potentialities, on the other hand, can, without intellectual guidance, end in the empty glorification of one's personal preference, i. e., one's more or less unconscious class prejudices. But when these qualities reenforce each other, the result is a definite propulsion towards revolution.

All these tendencies are fully illustrated in *Abinger Harvest,* a collection of essays written over more than thirty years. I have already quoted from some of the essays in the first part, called "The Present," and the others show much the same awareness of the

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nature and causes of bourgeois decline. The second section, "Books," with essays on Ibsen, Eliot, Proust, Lewis, and others, displays Mr. Forster as the very shrewd and balanced critic that, from *Aspects of the Novel*, we already know him to be. "The Past," with re-creations of scenes from the lives of Voltaire, Gibbon, Coleridge and Keats, demonstrates that Forster can play the game of Lytton Strachey and Mrs. Woolf, and, if only by virtue of unpretentiousness, beat them at it. "The East" contains a series of notes, mostly pretty marginal, on the theme of *A Passage to India*. The final section is a pageant written about Abinger, the village in which Mr. Forster lives.

It is, all told, an interesting book and one very much to the author's credit. It makes the reader wish that Mr. Forster were as well known and as widely read as he deserves to be. And at the same time it makes the reader wonder why he isn't a first-rate novelist. For he isn't, though in time it will be recognized that he came closer to the mark than many of his much more celebrated contemporaries. Perhaps it is not a good thing for a novelist to be balanced too precariously between classes.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

The Creators and the Possessors

CREATIVE AMERICA, by Mary van Kleeck. Covici-Friede. $3.

UNTIL recently it was a widespread conceit among American researchers in the social sciences that their task was limited to data-collecting. Interpretation was strictly eschewed as vulgar and unscientific. This formulation of the role of research proved a convenient device for dodging the significance of social facts. A few there were who insisted that social research must have significance to be valid, that its major purpose was to serve as an instrument for progressive social change. Among these few was Mary van Kleeck, Director of Industrial Studies at the Russell Sage Foundation for twenty-five years. Recognized as a leading social researcher, economist and social worker, Miss van Kleeck has consistently sought to relate her fact-finding to the social process, to transform social data qualitatively into social action. She has done yeomen service of late in aiding her fellow professionals to shake off their illusions about their status in modern society and to awaken them to an awareness of their real interests, in the direction of the militant labor movement.

In the pregnant book under review, she again transmutes social facts into effective social utility. Miss van Kleeck sets out to chart the roads to the goal of social security. While mass insecurity is a chronic condition of capitalism, it naturally reaches its most destructive phase during recurrent depressions. How can the cycle of economic crises be broken? Basic to this problem is the class struggle, which Miss van Kleeck translates in terms of "the conflict between creative and possessive forces." Among the "creative" forces, she includes not only the industrial proletariat, but its allies—farmers and workers in scientific, cultural and professional services. In swift, broad and expertly-executed strokes, the author traces the course of business cycles in American history from "prosperity" to panic, culminating in the present depression, the most devastating of all.

The early "American dream," essentially agrarian in nature, envisaged a security economy with every citizen a self-dependent property owner. This utopian ideal could never be realized. The progress of capitalism inevitably brought in its train the concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands, with the concomitant impoverishment of the many. The producers were expropriated from control of the instruments of production: the worker from ownership of the tool, the farmer from the land. Inherent in the profit system is the many-sided paradox of poverty amid plenty. America has become a land of possessors who do not create, and creators who do not possess. Insecurity is the common lot of the worker under capitalism. Denied access to the primary necessities of life, his security is vested solely in a job subject to all the hazards of industrial fluctuations. In 1934, twenty million persons were on the relief rolls—more than the total population of the United States a century ago. Even the employed worker cannot extend his sense of security beyond the next pay envelope.

Not only the worker, but the artist, the engineer, the musician, the medical man, the social worker and other professionals are thwarted by capitalism and denied full participation in the creative life which their capacities call for. Planning for social progress invariably comes into head-on collision with the profit system. Capitalism, which in its early progressive period encouraged and utilized the plans of scientists, now pigeon-holes and junks them in its retrogressive stage. It is ironic, as Miss van Kleeck points out, that the Taylor system, devised by the American engineer to make possible fuller production by the elimination of labor waste with benefits accruing to the worker, has been distorted by modern industrialism into the hideous, labor-destroying technique of speed-up. Its positive, beneficial aspects, appreciated by Lenin, have been embodied in Soviet industry, represented today by the great Stakhanovite movement—used in the interests of the workers, not against them. In America, great socially useful projects planned by engineers gather dust because they bring no profit to corporations. Architects and builders have devised planes to abolish the slums and erect healthful houses in beautifully designed communities. All for naught; they do not add to private profits. Social workers, criminologists, medical scientists and others have developed scientific methods of eliminating many of the social ills, but the profit system doesn't want these discoveries and techniques.

Everywhere in the capitalist world the profit motive acts as a brake on creative and constructive forces. Social progress demands the release of these creative forces from the strangling grip of possessive privilege.

> Out of the past and present conflict, [writes Miss van Kleeck] the challenging task of the future emerges: to overcome economic depressions; to lift the burden of debt from agriculture and industry; to change the conditions which produce poverty; to remove the root causes of social disorganization leading to crime; to organize production so that the material basis for livelihood will be secure for all; to set free the forces of skill and knowledge for the full development

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and use of America's productive capacity; to end the exploitation of oppressed classes and races and to free them for their special cultural contributions to world civilization; and finally, in the accomplishment of these tasks, to end war and establish secure peace.

How can these desiderata be realized? The workers and farmers and their allies among the lower middle class must beware the siren songs of the demagogues. In an enlightening section, Miss van Kleeck exposes the dangers inherent in the unrealistic utopian ideas of the EPIC and "share-the-wealth" movements and the fascistic threat lurking behind the velvety words of Father Coughlin (whose program, as she shows, is based on the "Forty Years After" encyclical of Pope Pius XI, setting forth the economic features of the corporative state of Italian fascism).

The immediate present calls for the creation of a people's front, a people's party—a Farmer-Labor Party. In this party, the professional groups, now disillusioned as to their independent status and more and more cognizant of their role as "hired hands" of capitalism, must join forces with the working class in the drive toward freeing creative America from the bonds of the possessing class. "Ultimate theory," Miss van Kleeck states, "need not now divide the American people. The basis of unity is here, in the issues of today. . . . The immediate task is to strengthen the labor movement, to win the widest possible support from the people, to protect civil liberties, and to resist fascism and war. . . . The source of power for political action by the people today, in defense of the as yet unfulfilled democratic ideal of government, must be found in a labor movement strengthened by its own struggle for democracy in industry."

Simply and forcefully written, this book presents a powerful argument for the united front. It is not free from errors and inaccuracies, but they are minor ones. The author's conception of the class struggle is blurred by the choice of non-Marxian terminology. Such terms as "prosperity" (as applied to intervals between depressions) and "race" (referring to the Jewish "race") are loosely used. At times, the author stops short in the middle of one subject to plunge pell-mell into another. Her unqualified statement that "industry can produce a surplus in periods of prosperity" may be challenged in view of the findings of the Brookings Institution studies on America's capacity to produce and to consume. The inclusion of a section quoting at length Jesus's exhortations to rich men to give up their goods and join the poor—as an added argument for the people's front—is of dubious value.

But let us not cavil about minor points. Here is an important book. It should have wide circulation, particularly among the still uncertain sections of the lower middle class who are the potential allies of the workers in the struggle for class liberation.

HENRY COOPER.

Classless Education

EDUCATION BEFORE VERDUN, by Arnold Zweig. Viking Press. $2.

OF ALL the war-novels, Arnold Zweig's *The Case of Sergeant Grischa* has stood out as the most profound, widening the war-theme to the presentation of fundamental human issues. The story became, furthermore, the first major indictment in German literature of the Prussian state, the first whole-hearted questioning of the Hegelian absolutism with which it had been traditionally adorned.

The events in *Education Before Verdun* precede those in *Grischa,* although the novel was written later. As in *Grischa,* the running theme is a moral arraignment of institutional bureaucracy and spiritual sluggishness, which are rendered more brutal in war. Kroysing, a young, poetic German lad, is sent to meet certain death, so that he might be prevented from disclosing unsavory practices at the front. But whereas the story of Grischa moves mainly prior to the Russian's execution, the body of this (post-1933) novel is taken up with the aftermath, following Kroysing's death, with the efforts of his elder brother to avenge his murder. The older Kroysing acts on the basis of a literal and negative Nietzschianism, believing that justice is the interest of the stronger and that warfare is a natural category. He considers his demand for revenge a desire for justice. But Zweig shows it to be non-human. It cannot right the wrong done and is directed at the "little men," whom the war placed in commanding positions. These men are mere pawns and only the executors of larger social currents. Kroysing's plans are cut short by a bomb that destroys a hospital where he has been recuperating. The fascist-minded Kroysing is killed, but Pahl, the Communist, is also struck down and in a similiar manner. These two "extremists" have not been educated before Verdun. Two non-extremists have. Professor Mertens, a jurist, had believed in the ideal merits of the German cause. His experiences in the war shatter his life-long faith. He locks himself in his room and slowly sips poison, while he plays Brahms. He dies, a German idealist, in dignified, lyrical capitulation to the forces before which he will not bow and which he cannot combat. His "resignation" foreshadows that of the bourgeois liberal in 1933.

Bertin survives. In *Grischa,* Bertin was a minor character, who had tried to gain freedom for the Russian prisoner. In the later novel, Bertin is the focus of Zweig's attention. He stands midway between Kroysing, at the right and Pahl, at the left, is tugged at by both, but goes quietly his own way. While he belongs to no one group, Bertin, a Jewish barrister and writer, is sought for and liked by all. Zweig's account begins with Bertin acting against official orders, by offering water to a French prisoner. This human gesture, breaking through conventional bonds, becomes the keynote to Bertin's later actions. Bertin becomes Zweig's symbolic carrier of the ethical idea, of "the inextinguishable desire for justice, implanted in the minds of men," which is to Zweig the ultimate guarantee for the victory of humanity over force. Bertin is, in part, a post-Hitlerite creation. The Jewish problem looms larger here than in *Grischa.* Zweig seems to place the hope for ethical regeneration in the Jew, "proud of his yearning for redemption, of the Messianic impulse toward a nobler world, that

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had dominated the spiritual history of his race since the days of Nebuchadnezzar." Nazism has not made Zweig more militant. It sent him to Palestine.

What is the significance of Zweig's unusual procedure of going back to events that antedate those in *Grischa?* The answer seems to me to be connected with Zweig's special interest in the social problem. Zweig is not "going back" so much as he is tracing the basic root-elements of the socialist idea toward which he leans. He is seeking the final positive principle, even as destruction goes on, attempting to save the creative substance in the midst of the whirlpool. Bertin, a comrade to all men, even in the war, is to Zweig the promise of the victory over the classman. Bertin's "education" does not go far, because it seems to be almost complete. He is, to be sure, as yet, "a Parsifal in regulation boots;" he must still learn that at times force must be met with force. But he contains the end: comradeship and love.

This book is not as good a story as *Grischa.* But it has a moving, musical undertone and is written with sustained passion. Zweig presents a plea for a union of various human values, which he abstracts from their undesirable contexts. He would combine the power and militance of Kroysing, the sweet and homely kindliness of the Jesuit Father Lochner, Pahl's burning zeal for the socialist society. And all of them need, even now, while the fire rages, the still binding force of sympathy and understanding of Bertin. Zweig, now almost blind, physically worn and tired, is leaving the question of the harder means that need to be employed as well, to others.

VICTOR BURTT.

The Decline of a Traitor

RED NECK, by McAlister Coleman and Stephen Raushenbush. Smith and Haas. $2.00.

DAVE HOUSTON, from the night he was inspired by a speech from the lips of John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers, believed in his destiny as a leader of the coal diggers. He would do something to help his people, but—most important—he'd stand where Mitchell was standing, and his comrades would look up to him and follow him. This belief impelled Dave to grub wearily in a night school, though he was only an average scholar. It fortifies him in his refusal to marry a hunky girl who bears his illegitimate child. Because a leader must not be a coward before his followers, and because he was enraged at their cowardice in scuttling to cover when a loud-mouthed vigilante brandished a gun at them, Dave shoots the Ku Kluxer dead. He will not truckle to the district machine to buy its support for his defense against the charge of murder. He is saved by friends who intimidate the jurors. The seeds of defeat and disillusion were planted by this event, for Dave realizes that his freedom was not won by an unclouded vindication, but by a trick. His first night of freedom is spent riotously in a whorehouse.

His marriage to an ambitious school teacher helps Dave along the path of compromise and surrender. In order to get out of the mines and to make a decent living for himself and his family Dave accepts a job as organizer. The trial had dampened his idealism, and now contact with the harsh realities of the labor world does not steel him, as it would a leader of more wisdom and mettle, but puts the fear into him. After a cruel beating by mine thugs, he hides like a frightened animal in the bushes as he sees a motorcycle cop approaching. At the end, Dave's only solace is the whisky bottle and his sixty dollar a week salary. He has been forced to return, not to the tune of triumphant acclaim but with the conscience of a traitor, to the local union which sent him into the movement, with the demand that it surrender the charter because the local has become infested with "reds" who demand action—men in revolt against the bureaucracy which young Dave Houston, full of militancy and hope, had once fought.

McAlister Coleman, a veteran labor journalist, knows coal diggers intimately enough to write such a book unaided, but with the assistance of Stephen Raushenbush, a coal expert, he has turned out a book that rings as genuine as a silver dollar on a marble slab. Perhaps Dave Houston's story is not an inspiring one, and certainly Dave is not an admirable character, but, unfortunately for the labor movement, he is a true one. I have known more than one Dave Houston in my experience with the miners' unions: men who at one time struck blows for the workers' cause, but, not being of the finer stuff required in great leaders and being only vaguely conscious of the forces and objectives involved, retreat into the secure haven of regular salaries and swivel-chair organizing rather than face machine guns and vigilante terror. It is understandable why such leaders declare an armistice with the enemy, and do most of their battling with the "reds" who refuse to take it lying down and who still believe that an organizer's place is in the thick of the fight. The tired, scared, aging men cry "Peace! Peace!" when there is no peace. In telling of them with such insight, McAlister Coleman and Stephen Raushenbush have written an interesting tale of decline.

JACK CONROY.

Jefferson, Dead or Alive

THE LIVING JEFFERSON, by James Truslow Adams. Scribners. $3.00.

THIS is a political speech, masquerading as a biography, in which the most maligned figure in American history is given a fresh coat of blacking by a self-appointed disciple. Mr. Adams interprets the living Jefferson as a bitter foe of the New Deal whose 1936 platform would urge the electorate to balance the budget (vote for Landon), defend the rigorous sanctity of the Constitution (vote for Knox), take the government out of business (vote for Smith), oppose alien immigration (vote for the Satevepost) and decrease government "gifts" to the unemployed (vote for Hearst). Mr. Adams' Jefferson is entitled by age and blatancy to the honorary presidency of the Liberty League.

To anyone who has read Jefferson's work sympathetically these distortions are maddening. Only political opportunism, or ignorance, can account for the separation of Jefferson's specific program for a nascent industrial society from the general social attitudes which formed the background of this program.

Of all people, Jefferson was least addicted to the fatal creed of a static universe in which a specific act of legislation would always have the same meaning no matter what the social context in which it was framed. He despised those men, like Mr. Adams and Mr. Shouse, who "look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence and deem them, like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human and suppose what they did beyond amendment." In discussing a constitution for Virginia he argued that provision should be made for a change every nineteen years. And in writing of Shays' rebellion he declared, "God forbid we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion. . . . The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure." The whole spirit of Jefferson's thought and activity is violated by Mr. Adams' reactionary interpretation. The Jefferson who devoted his life to struggling against the dead hand of the past refuses to be converted into a dead hand himself.

A word about Mr. Adams. He has disguised himself as a Liberal and as a historian. Each of these pretensions is fraudulent.

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Music

Sold—for Less Than a Song

EVEN the most sheltered popular composers in America have difficulty in eking out a living from their efforts. The sale of sheet music, from which the greater part of the profits come, is still in a deplorable state because of over-plugging of tunes by the radio stations. The royalties from the sale of phonograph records and piano rolls, although better than at any time in the last five years, are still a fraction of what they were in boom times. But accepted Broadway tunesmiths are at least protected in their dealings with the publishers by the Songwriters Protective Association, an affiliate of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, which insists upon a standard contract with specific guarantees for the composer.

The unorganized composers, however, are an easy prey for the vultures connected with the popular music industry. Particularly exploitable are the many talented Negro musicians and writers, most of whom are unfamiliar with the intricacies of contracts and ready to give up all their royalties for an outright purchase price which rarely exceeds $25. Such agencies as A.S.C.A.P. or the S.P.A. are powerless to help them, for the important publishers specializing in this material are not members of the organization.

The leading exponent of these methods in publishing is Irving Mills, who owns Exclusive Publications, Inc., which in turn has acquired the catalogs of Milson's, Lawrence and various other companies. Mills' method is as ingenious as it is unfair to the author and composer: he usually buys the tune outright for a small sum, attaches his own name as co-author, instructs his bands (Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Blue Rhythm, etc., etc.) to record it for the various companies (Columbia, Brunswick, Melotone) with which he is affiliated, and collects sums ranging from one to two cents per record as royalty, *all of which he pockets.* Hundreds of dollars are often collected from phonograph royalties alone, because the sale of this music is even wider in Europe than in America; but the composer is deprived of any share of it.

The excellent Negro composer and bandleader, Benny Carter, has had amusing, if painful, experiences with Mills. A few years ago he wrote the extremely popular "Blues in My Heart" which earned thousands of dollars for Mills—and twenty-five dollars for himself. He learned his lesson and determined not to be so gullible in the future. Two years later he wrote an equally attractive piece, "Lonesome Nights," and demanded a royalty contract. Furious, Mills reluctantly gave him what he asked for, refused to give any advance payment on royalties, had new—and bad—lyrics appended, and neglected to feature or plug the tune. Here was the absurd situation of a publisher punishing his own pocketbook merely for spite.

Mills has a tremendous source of talent in the musicians in his various orchestras, many of whom are prolific songwriters. To my knowledge none has ever ventured to sell his work to any publisher other than Mills, whose enmity as an employer is dangerous to incur. It is significant to note that Irving Mills, who is credited with the writing of hundreds of tunes, cannot read a note of music.

The phonograph companies are also guilty of shady practices in connection with Negro and hillbilly artists and composers. In the "race" and hillbilly catalogs it has long been the practice to acquire tunes which sell in the hundreds of thousands for sums ranging from a jug of mountain corn to $10 or $15. One leading company assigns all this material to a publishing company which is owned by one of its officials. Others merely save the penny-odd royalty that would ordinarily go to the artist and publisher either for themselves or favored officers.

Recently, however, these practices have been extended into the popular catalogs. One of the officials of the Decca Record Company is busily acquiring the copyrights of songs which he later records. To cite some specific examples: Andy Kirk's excellent band from Kansas City recently came to New York and recorded nearly forty titles. More than half of these were original, unpublished and uncopyrighted songs which had to be assigned to the official in question before they could be set down on wax. The various composers, all members of the band, either received a minute percentage of the profits or a small outright payment for their work. That some of the songs would sell in the thousands there could be no question, since they were put on the reverse side of well-known tunes like "Christopher Columbus," whose sales on Decca alone will probably reach fifty thousand. The official is in a position to make, at a penny and a third per selection, something over $600 on the selection "Froggy Bottom" from the American Decca sales. When this is added to the English royalties of two cents a side (on English Columbia, Brunswick, or Parlophone) and other foreign receipts, a tidy sum will be made, but not by the rightful composer, the brilliant Negro pianist, Mary Lou Williams.

Then there is the case of the composer of "Christopher Columbus," the saxophonist Leon Berry of Fletcher Henderson's orchestra. Berry was persuaded to sell his rights to the tune outright for $300. Had he kept them he would have received thousands of dollars from the sales of orchestrations, sheet music, transcriptions, and records, for the tune is the country's best seller both on records and orchestrations. As it is, the publisher, Joe Davis, makes *all* the profit.

Another of the country's most popular tunes, "Stompin' at the Savoy," has a shameful tale behind it. Edgar Sampson, its Negro composer, originally christened it "Misty Morning," and Rex Stewart, in whose band Sampson was playing alto saxophone, used it as his theme song. Sampson then joined Chick Webb's orchestra, when a representative of Columbia heard the tune and succeeded in persuading Webb to record it for that company. The title was changed, because Duke Ellington had written a tune bearing the same name, Chick Webb was cut in for a share of the royalties, and "Stompin' at the Savoy" was born.

Benny Goodman, the noted band leader, was in the studio at the time. He was enormously impressed with the composition and acquired an arrangement of it for the band he was forming for Billy Rose's Music Hall. Goodman recommended that Sampson go to the publishing firm of Robbins, which had always fought shy of anything resembling a "hot" tune, and through his influence had the tune accepted by the publishing sceptics. This was nearly two years ago, and Goodman proceeded to feature the tune night after night on the radio and on records. In return for this the publisher gave Goodman a share of Sampson's royalties, which is the regularly accepted but disgraceful practice of Broadway bandleaders and publishers.

By the spring of this year the tune was becoming one of the biggest sellers in the country, and Goodman was receiving most of the credit as composer. To make matters worse, he offered to buy out Sampson and Webb's share of the tune for an absurdly inadequate amount, but very quickly saw the error of his ways and recanted.

Unfortunately, Goodman, who has done more for Negro musicians than any other

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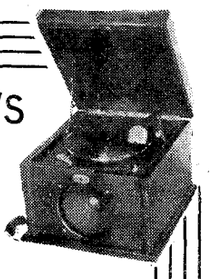

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white leader and is responsible for the current success of Fletcher Henderson and Teddy Wilson, has taken credit for part of the writing of other tunes, including "House Hop" and "Swingtime in the Rockies," both of them composed in their entirety by his arranger, James Mundy. The publishers are largely responsible for this state of affairs, claiming that it is impossible to sell tunes by unknowns.

HENRY JOHNSON.

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Between Ourselves

NEXT week's issue will contain detailed information on the forthcoming summer quarterly of THE NEW MASSES, an enlarged 48-page issue scheduled for publication on July 28. As we announced some time ago, the feature articles in this quarterly will center around the present election campaign.

Our business department informs us that it would appreciate receiving bundle orders within the next ten days. It asks those who wish to place such orders to do so early, since a last-minute rush in these matters apparently has become a NEW MASSES quarterly-issue tradition. Special rates are available to organizations.

Stanley Burnshaw, whose literary and dramatic critical articles have appeared regularly in our pages, will speak at Cooks Falls Lodge, Cooks Falls, New York, on July 5. His subject is: "A Hope for Literature."

Among the contributors to this issue are a number of writers whose work is well known to our readers. Those appearing for the first time in THE NEW MASSES are:

Jose Diaz, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain;

Colonel John C. Robinson, American Negro aviator, recently returned from Ethiopia, where he served on the side of the defenders against the invading Italian Fascist army;

Louis Ginsberg, author of several volumes of lyric poetry.

Charles Bradford ("Theirs Is the Kingdom") is the author of "The Blue Hat," which we published December 27, 1934.

Jean Simon ("Myth of the Free Public Library") and her collaborator, Paul Reynolds, are members of the professional staff in two large libraries. Miss Simon's article on children's literature, "Which Books for Your Children?" appeared in THE NEW MASSES of December 24, 1935.

Ruth Lechlitner's poetry and reviews have appeared before in our pages.

Philip Stevenson's most recent contribution was a report on the Gallup kidnaping. His play, *You Can't Change Human Nature,* enjoyed an extended run on a recent bill of the Theater Collective in New York City.

The next meeting of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES will take place on Wednesday evening, July 8, at 8:30 p. m., in Room 717A, Steinway Hall, New York City. Mr. David M. Freedman, New York attorney, will discuss the Minimum Wage Law and Supreme Court Action. Everyone interested in the work of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES is invited to attend.

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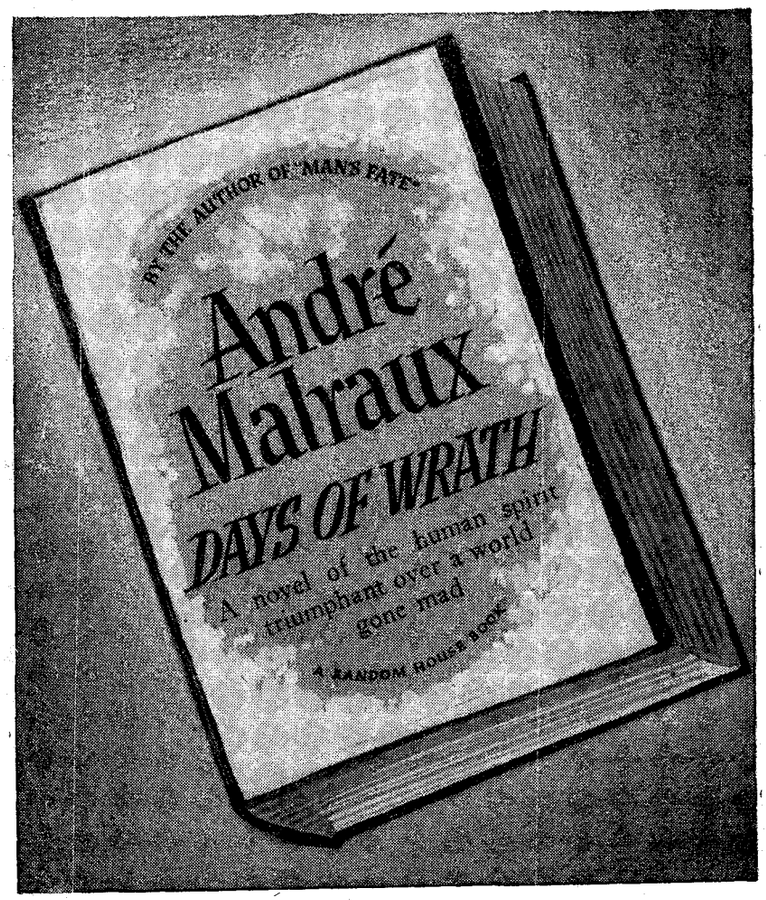
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